

Khartoum denies coup report

KHARTOUM (AP) — The Sudanese government Sunday denied news reports of a coup attempt that led to the execution of 20 officers. An Egyptian opposition newspaper Al Wafd reported Saturday that the Sudanese military government of Omar Hassan Al Bashir executed 20 army officers involved with the attempted coup. The paper said the thwarted coup took place on April 13 and that the execution was last Tuesday. It said 12 members of the ruling junta attended the trial. On April 15, Lieutenant-General Bashir dismissed two members of his 15-man Revolutionary Command Council with no official explanation. Al Wafd said one of them, Major General Faisal Abu Saleh who also served as interior minister, objected to the executions and was put under house arrest. The official Sudan News Agency carried a denial of the report by the government's spokesman, Foreign Minister Ali Ahmad Sahaloul. "These fabricated news are just part of a campaign aiming to defame the Sudan (government)," Mr. Sahaloul said. He said these reports were perpetrated by "ill-intentioned elements."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرائي

Volume 16 Number 4681

AMMAN MONDAY, APRIL 22, 1991, SHAWAL 8, 1411

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

King receives Nigerian message

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Sunday received a message from Nigerian President Ibrahim Babangida. The message was delivered by the Nigerian oil minister.

Bessmertnykh said to visit Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — Foreign Minister Alexander Bessmertnykh will soon become the highest-ranking Soviet official to visit Israel in its 43-year history, an Israeli diplomat said Sunday. Asked if Israel had received a formal announcement the Soviet foreign minister would include Israel during a forthcoming Middle East tour, the Israeli consul-general to Moscow Arieh Levin said: "Yes." He told Israeli army radio he expected that the "visit will take place soon. Soon — that means within a month or two months."

SLA man dies in bomb explosion

TEL AVIV (AP) — A militiaman from the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) died Sunday in a bomb explosion in South Lebanon, Israeli army radio said. Military sources confirmed the report and said the incident occurred when the SLA patrol was near the town of Jazmine, 28 kilometres north of Israel and just outside its self-proclaimed "security zone." Israel carved out its 100-square kilometre zone in 1985 when it withdrew the bulk of its forces after a three-year occupation of southern Lebanon. The zone is patrolled jointly by Israel and SLA members.

Sudan to resettle 800,000 refugees

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan is to resettle 800,000 people who have fled to the capital to escape famine and civil war in the south of the country, the official news agency SUNA said on Sunday. SUNA said the council of ministers approved the measures Saturday. The refugees will be returned to their homes or taken to new settlement sites. An estimated two million refugees are in Khartoum, fleeing starvation and fierce fighting in the south between the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and government troops. Relief officials say 7.5 million people, out of a population of about 25 million, face acute hunger in 1991. SUNA said the cabinet had stressed that the refugees being resettled should be guaranteed a livelihood.

Albania proposes travel reforms

VIENNA (AP) — Albania proposed measures to simplify travel to neighbouring countries in an apparent attempt to curb a continuing exodus from the Communist-ruled nation. The government proposed simplifying travel to and from neighbouring countries and setting up a commission to deal with problems posed by the exodus, the state ATA news agency reported. At a cabinet session Saturday, the government said the continuing exodus was affecting Albania's relations with Greece, Yugoslavia and Italy. ATA said. Tens of thousands of Albanians have fled their homeland in recent months, despite democratic changes that led last month to the first multi-party elections since the Communists assumed power in 1944.

UNICEF sends aid to Kurdish children

BERLIN (AP) — The U.S. air force flew 17 tonnes of medical equipment supplied by UNICEF to Turkey Sunday to help Kurdish refugees suffering from diarrhoea and dehydration, the U.S. European command said. UNICEF, the United Nations' Children's Fund, moved the oral rehydration kits by truck from Copenhagen, Denmark, to the U.S. Rhein-Main air force base near Frankfurt. U.S. military personnel loaded the medical supplies onto a plane that flew to Incirlik, Turkey, the command said in a statement. The supplies were to be flown later Sunday from Incirlik to a humanitarian support base in Silopi

Baker says talks fruitful, but details remain unresolved

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. SECRETARY OF State James Baker flew to Saudi Arabia from Egypt Sunday saying his talks in Cairo on a Middle East peace conference had been fruitful but that details were still unresolved.

Mr. Baker, on the sixth day of his latest mission to try to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict, told reporters of his meeting with President Hosni Mubarak:

"We are partners ... in this effort to produce a conference which will serve as a catalyst for direct bilateral negotiations between Israel and her Arab neigh-

bours and between Israel and Palestinians, and thereby break taboos that have existed for many, many years."

But he refused to answer questions on whether the proposed regional peace conference would be attended by Palestinians from occupied Arab Jerusalem, despite the Jewish state's opposition to this.

Nor would he say if the meeting would be a one-day ceremonial one or would be the start of continuing negotiations. Israel wants the meeting to be largely ceremonial and break up into direct Arab-Israeli talks.

Palestinians and the Arab

countries want it to be a negotiating session, based on the U.N. resolutions foreseeing Israel exchanging land for peace.

"When the time comes that I can answer those questions for you I certainly will answer them for you because we do have positions on them and I don't mean to suggest we don't," Mr. Baker said.

But some of the discussions were very sensitive, he said: "I'm not going to answer these questions now because I am not prepared. I want this process to go forward and I want it to succeed."

Baker arrived in Cairo Satur-



James Baker

day from Amman.

His said he was disappointed over Jordan's position on the Gulf crisis, but the peace process required that he visit Jordan.

"It was a very good visit on the issue of peace," he said.

Speaking after a 90-minute meeting with President Mubarak, Mr. Baker said any Middle East peace conference must have an international character which countries not directly involved in

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Iraq assails U.S. presence in north, silent on Kurdish talks

IRAQ ON SUNDAY denounced the presence of U.S. troops on its Kurdish soil as interference but kept silent on reports that four leaders of the Kurdish rebellion are in Baghdad as its guests for peace talks.

The ruling Baath Party's newspaper Al Thawra accused Washington of breaking international law by sending hundreds of troops to northern Iraq to establish and guard havens for Kurdish refugees.

Up to two million refugees fled to Turkey and Iran when Iraq ended twin insurrections by rebels from the Kurdish north and Shi'ite south of Iraq in March.

"The United States has taken a new and openly aggressive attitude against Iraq by sending troops into the north," the newspaper said in an editorial.

"This new hostile American act represents a flagrant interference in the internal affairs of Iraq and a clear violation of international law."

Kurdish rebel spokesman said in London Saturday that Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), was in Baghdad at the invitation of President Saddam Hussein and his government.

Other members of the delegation were Netchirvan Barazani, nephew of Kurdish Democratic Party leader Massoud Barazani, Sami Abdul Rahman of the People's Democratic Party and Rasoul Mamand of the Socialist Party of Kurdistan, the spokesman said.

The letter was the latest in a series of complaints against Iraq, which Iraq has accused of orchestrating anti-government rebellion in the Kurdish north and Shi'ite south of the country.

Iran has repeatedly denied the charge. Iraqi troops crushed the month-long twin rebellion which began immediately after the six-week Gulf war at the end of

(Continued on page 5)

Iraq accuses Iran of shelling in violation of ceasefire accord

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Baghdad has accused Iranian forces of shelling an Iraqi border town in a further violation of the United Nations-brokered ceasefire that halted the eight-year war between the two countries.

The Iraqi News Agency (INA) said Sunday that Iraq's U.N. envoy had delivered a letter to Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar reporting "further violations" of the August 1988 ceasefire.

The letter said 12 rockets fired from the Qasr-e-Shirin area in central Iran fell in the town of Faylakh Thursday.

"This violation, to be added to previous Iranian violations, reaffirms the Iranian government's determination to violate the ceasefire... and its intentional attempts to harm Iraq's sovereignty and security," INA

quoted the letter as saying. "The Iraqi government reasserts that the Iranian government is responsible for all the damage caused to Iraq by these violations," added the agency.

On Saturday, INA said Iraq complained to the U.N. over two separate border incidents in which Iranian "infiltrators" entered Iraqi territory and clashed with Iraqi soldiers.

In the letter, Iraq said eight Iranians were killed and five Iraqi soldiers were wounded in separate clashes along the 1,200-kilometre border earlier in April.

"These violations confirm once again the determination of the Iranian government to violate the articles of the ceasefire agreement and its deliberate search to infringe upon the security and

sovereignty of Iraq," INA quoted the letter as saying.

The Iraqi government "would affirm anew the responsibility of the Iranian government for all damages caused by the violations,"

INA said the Iraqi envoy asked the U.N. to distribute the letter as a U.N. Security Council document.

The letter was the latest in a series of complaints against Iraq, which Iraq has accused of orchestrating anti-government rebellion in the Kurdish north and Shi'ite south of the country.

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(Continued on page 5)

Kuwaiti opposition rejects new cabinet, vows to press demands

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — Upset with the new cabinet, opposition groups vowed Sunday to resume joint rallies and other forms of pressure to call for greater democracy.

The prime minister, Crown Prince Sa'ad Al Abdullah Al Sabah, announced a new government Saturday that changed many key posts. But the new leadership is not expected to undertake major policy changes, and control of the country, for now, will remain firmly in the hands of the Al Sabah family.

"The majority of Kuwaitis are frustrated with the new cabinet," said Eisa Al Shaheen, a leader of the Islamic Constitutional Movement, a Sunni Muslim group. "Despite the immensity of the disaster (caused by the Iraqi invasion), the government acts as though nothing happened."

Mr. Shaheen said his group, considered the strongest opposition movement, would continue to work closely with several other factions, which include Sunnis, Shiites and liberals, secular movements.

Political parties are outlawed in Kuwait, but opposition groups

have been staging joint political rallies that were forbidden by authorities prior to the Iraqi invasion last August. The rallies, which have drawn up to 1,000 men, would continue, opposition figures said.

A woman in the Islamic Constitutional Movement said: "Like the other political powers, we think the new cabinet failed to meet popular expectations."

"It is a clear-cut rejection of the people's demands. It is a traditional formation which is not in line with the current post-liberation situation," Abeer Ruwashed said.

Kuwait's opposition groups are moderate and mild-mannered, made up mostly of wealthy, educated middle-age men who balance calls for reforms and greater democracy with statements acknowledging their respect for the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah.

The groups are calling for the restoration of parliament and the constitution, which were suspended in 1966, along with greater press freedom.

The emir responded partially to opposition demands two weeks

ago when he announced that parliamentary elections would be held next year and that women may be allowed to vote.

But opposition groups have been unanimous in criticising the selections for the 21-member cabinet, which was sworn in by the emir Sunday morning.

"Some names have changed, but the mentality is the same," said Ahmad Bakar, a member of the suspended parliament and a leader of Salaf, a Sunni opposition group. "There can be no good government in Kuwait until the constitution is restored."

The crown prince removed four members of the Al Sabah family from the cabinet but added two other members. In all, there are five Al Sabahs in the new, 21-man cabinet, down from seven in the former cabinet.

The entire cabinet resigned March 19 amid intense public complaints about the government's difficulties in restoring essential services in the first three weeks following Kuwait's liberation.

No prominent members of

(Continued on page 5)

Gorbachev under immense pressure

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Hard-liners Sunday launched a petition drive for a special parliamentary session to consider a national state of emergency and demand a state-of-the-union report from President Mikhail Gorbachev.

A resolution approved by nearly 700 delegates attending a weekend conference organised by the Soyuz hardline group stopped short of demanding Mr. Gorbachev's resignation.

"We consider it necessary to call an extraordinary Congress of People's Deputies in May 1991," said the Soyuz resolution, approved by a show of hands with only a few dissenters.

The vote followed a heated debate over whether Mr. Gorbachev should be called to account for his performance amid

an ailing Soviet economy and continued calls for independence from Soviet republics.

To convene an extraordinary session of the Congress of People's Deputies, the country's highest legislative body, Soyuz needs the signatures of one-fifth of the 2,250 lawmakers.

Soyuz claims to represent 500 members of the congress, although only 160 attended the conference, raising questions about how unified the group is.

The resolution has two main points — to demand the congress consider imposing a nationwide state of emergency, and to have Mr. Gorbachev "account for" his use of sweeping executive powers granted by parliament last year.

The congress then would "evaluate" the president's report,

the resolution says. "A meeting of congress could finally settle the question of the presidency... I would like (Mr. Gorbachev) to introduce a state of emergency himself and finally show he is a man. But if he can't, then perhaps a more resolute person will," Soyuz leader Yuri Blokhin told reporters during a conference in Moscow.

In a Saturday night television address Prime Minister Valentin Pavlov predicted better times if the country backed Mr. Gorbachev's latest anti-crisis plan.

This includes price rises, slow privatisation and a ban on strikes — but would be heavily reliant on help from governments in unruly republics.

Coalminers have been on strike

for seven weeks demanding Mr. Gorbachev's resignation and unions have called a protest action throughout the giant Russian Republic for Friday.

Union leaders say it could include a one-hour shutdown of oil supplies.

In Byelorussia, once the model of a conservative Communist-controlled republic, labour leaders called a general strike for Tuesday, also demanding that Mr. Gorbachev step down as president.

Mr. Gorbachev, who failed to bring any substantial economic backing during a trip to Japan last week, faces a possible challenge to his Communist Party leadership when the Central Committee meets on Wednesday to discuss his economic failures.

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Gulf ministers to discuss fund

NICOSIA (R) — Finance officials from Saudi Arabia and five Gulf Arab states, keen to reward their Gulf war allies, began talks in Riyadh Sunday on how they should lend their petrodollars. Undersecretary at the finance ministries of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Oman are preparing for a meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) finance ministers, the first since the Gulf war ended. A GCC summit in Doha last December agreed to set up a new fund believed to be an initial \$5 billion to lend to poorer Arab states in economic difficulty. Most of the aid was expected to be channelled to Egypt and Syria, which took part in U.S.-led allied forces that fought Iraq. The two countries agreed in Damascus last month to take part in a Gulf regional security system that would be financed by the six oil-rich GCC states. "The meeting aims at discussing and evaluating the joint economic drive in implementing the (GCC) supreme council's resolution in Doha," Sheikh Mohammad Ben Khalifa Al Thani of Qatar said in an opening speech, carried by the Saudi Press Agency (SPA). It gave no further details.

Palestine Central Council convenes

TUNIS (R) — Leading members of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) were meeting in Tunis Sunday to discuss tactics for a possible Middle East peace conference promoted by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

The 100-strong Palestine Central Council (PCC) is expected to approve a call for five-nation talks to coordinate the positions of the PLO, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Egypt ahead of the U.S.-proposed conference, council member Abdallah Hourani said.

"Whether we decide on participating in the peace conference or continue to demand further clarification will depend on the results of consultations with the Arab countries concerned," Mr. Hourani told Reuters.

Mr. Baker, on his third Middle East peace mission since the Gulf war ended, is discussing the possibility of Palestinian representatives taking part in a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation to peace talks.

A joint delegation would be one way of surmounting Israeli opposition to negotiating with the PLO but Jordan has said that it will only represent the Palestinians if invited to do so by them.

"Coordination between Arab positions is important ... in particular total agreement between the PLO and Jordan on all stages in the peace process," Mr. Hourani said.

Mr. Baker earlier met Palestinian leaders in Jerusalem. Faisal Al Hussein, who headed the Palestinian delegation, said afterwards the atmosphere had been more constructive than in their two previous meetings.

Mr. Hourani said the PLO was trying to improve ties with Syria, which have been troubled since 1983.

The council meeting, the first top-level PLO gathering since the end of the Gulf war, will test PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's ability to maintain cohesion when two leaders, Nayef Hawatmeh and George Habash, have made public their hostility to Washington's initiatives.

Mr. Hourani said two Palestinian factions which broke away from the PLO in 1988 because of differences of opinion over strategy, had been invited to the PCC meeting.

However, Saika, linked to

(Continued on page 4)

Aga Khan, Baghdad mayor fear epidemics

PARIS (R) — U.N. humanitarian envoy Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan said Sunday that cases of cholera had been identified in southern Iraq and there was a grave risk of epidemics breaking out.

Speaking on Radio France Internationale, Prince Aga Khan said the risk of a cholera epidemic would be exacerbated in summer, when temperatures in Iraq soar to 50 degrees Celsius (122 Fahrenheit).

"It's especially the case around Basra. There the risk of epidemics is very serious, especially cholera, which has already been identified," he said.

Dr. Jawad Kadhim, head of preventive medicine for Baghdad, said last week that with sewage plants and water supplies still out of action, the risk of epidemics was high.

"We are very frightened of cholera now," he said.

The mayor of Baghdad said Sunday the hot summer months and a shortage of electricity to pump sewage could cause epidemics in the Iraqi capital.

"An epidemic could easily kill 50,000 in Baghdad if we cannot control the sewage," Khalid Abdul Mun'em Rashid told a news conference.

Mr. Rashid said air and missile

attacks by the United States and its Gulf war allies had crippled key services such as electricity and telecommunications.

"Electricity, sewage are a very serious matter for a city not only for the cleanliness and sanitation, but to avoid epidemics," he said. "It is like a nuclear bomb in the city."

Power and water supplies have returned to the capital since the Gulf war ended on Feb. 28, but electricity in particular is intermittent.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has installed 70,000-litre mobile drinking water tanks.

"Safe drinking water really has become very important in Iraq," János Jossen, deputy head of an ICRC delegation in Iraq, told a news conference Saturday.

He said the problem was particularly acute in the south.

In his interview on French Radio, Prince Aga Khan called on the United Nations to lift sanctions, imposed after Iraq invaded Kuwait, which are preventing the country from buying food.

"The humanitarian aspects of the sanctions should be separated from the rest and we should allow

(Continued on page 4)

Iran: Western pressure on Israel will help hostages

TEHRAN (AP) — Iran's foreign minister Sunday called for the United States and other Western countries to pressure Israel to release pro-Iranian prisoners as part of a broad release of hostages in Lebanon.

Mr. Velayati told a news conference that a release of captives held by the Israelis would "create a good climate for the release of Western hostages."

Mr. Velayati also said Iran would gladly accept American assistance to the estimated one million Kurdish refugees who have poured across Iran's border with Iraq.

He said he believed the Red Crescent had already relayed to the United States a list of items needed to cope with the Kurdish exodus.

"We have said repeatedly that there is no obstacle to accepting aid from any country," Mr. Velayati said. "If the United States decides to help the Kurdish refugees, there is no obstacle from our side."

Iran in the past has refused to accept even indirect aid from the U.S. government.

Mr. Velayati said that for relations to improve, the United States must release Iranian assets frozen after the Islamic revolution of 1979 and the seizure of American hostages in Tehran, who were freed in 1981.

Asked if the United States must free the assets to win Iran's help in releasing the hostages, Mr. Velayati said: "That is another problem."

On April 16, U.S. President George Bush told a news conference that freedom for Western hostages in Lebanon was "the bottom line" for improving Iran's relations with the United States.

Mr. Velayati also said his country would agree to allied-established safe havens for Kurds inside Iraq "if it (the operation) is under supervision of the United Nations."

But he added that Iran would oppose such enclaves inside Iraq near the Iranian border.

Iranian officials have been wary of the safe haven project and deeply suspicious of the Western countries imposing it.

هنا من الوطن

Kabul braces for renewed fighting despite peace feelers

KABUL (R) — Afghan President Najibullah, distrustful new talk of peace from his enemies, is bracing for a summer of fighting following one of Kabul's worst military defeats in 13 years of civil war.

Since Mujahadeen guerrillas seized the eastern city of Khost on March 31, Najibullah has reinforced defenses around eastern cities he expects to be the next targets — Gardez and Ghazni. At the same time he is putting out political feelers, trying to woo moderate elements in the guerrilla leadership and ensure a place for his ruling Watan (Homeland) Party in a new Afghanistan, political analysts said.

Najibullah, asked in a recent interview about Mujahadeen plans for a spring offensive, said they were nothing new.

"They have tested their capabilities several times but have faced ignominy. We can give a fitting response to any adventurist and subversive action," he said.

His aides were dubious about a flurry of diplomatic activity by Pakistani, United Nations and Soviet officials aimed at starting a political dialogue.

"I believe the followers of a military settlement will try again to see how fragile Kabul is," said Faeed Mazdak, the Watan Party's deputy chairman and third most powerful official. "Only then will they see that a military settlement will not work."

Mujahadeen leaders so far have refused, at least publicly, to

sit across the negotiating table from Najibullah, the former head of the government's feared security agency Khad.

"These images (of brutality) cannot be changed from long distance," said Mazdak. "It's like the woman you want to kiss. We have a saying in Afghanistan that you can't send a kiss through a messenger."

Buoyed by their success at Khost, some guerrilla commanders are urging an offensive against Gardez and even the major eastern city of Jalalabad where they were humiliated in 1989.

In Kabul, the fall of Khost was acknowledged as a shock, a loss of prestige for the Soviet-supported government even if the town had little strategic importance.

"It's a shock, but he definitely can absorb it," said a diplomat. "I think there will be something of a military shakeup. Najibullah might position (trusted) commanders in other places that might be targets of attack. But it will be difficult for the Mujahadeen to repeat Khost."

Pakistan, with the United States and Saudi Arabia the guerrillas' main backers, this month signalled new readiness for a political solution to the war.

It is now talking with Moscow about a visit by a senior Soviet official, while United Nations special envoy Benon Sevan is shuttling between Islamabad, Kabul, Geneva, New York and

Moscow.

"Now is the time for the United States to create viable political alternatives," said a senior Najibullah aide who asked not to be identified. "A way in which moderate elements on both sides can be brought together to find a peaceful solution to rebuild the country."

On roads leading from Kabul, at security checkpoints within the city and in the bazaars, soldiers were reluctant to talk about Khost.

But Kabul civilians, while sounding more critical of the president than they have since Soviet troops withdrew in 1989, appeared repelled by Mujahadeen behaviour at Khost.

Listening to a Western news report about looting of the city after its capture, a book merchant remarked: "What are the Mujahadeen doing? Don't they want to keep Khost? Don't they want civilians to accept them in other cities?"

300 reported killed

More than 300 people were killed and up to 500 wounded in an Afghan government Scud missile attack on the guerrilla-held northeastern Afghanistan town of Asadabad, a rebel party said Sunday.

A spokesman for the Jamaat-i-Dawa Ilal Koran-wa-Sunnah party said in neighbouring Pakistan he had information that 300 bodies had been found in the



Najibullah debris after three Soviet-made Scuds hit the town, capital of Kunar province, on Saturday evening.

Many of the bodies were buried beyond recognition, Jamaat-i-Dawa public director Hayatullah told Reuters by telephone from the nearby Pakistani border town of Bajaur.

He said between 400 and 500 people were wounded. Two of the missiles hit the main business centre of the town, which is only 25 kilometres from the Pakistani border, he said.

The Pakistan-based Afghan rebel government's official Media news service said earlier that more than 70 people were killed and more than 100 seriously wounded in the attack which it called a "heinous and unforgivable crime against the Afghan nation."

It said "the process of taking bodies out of the debris continued until Sunday afternoon... and the exact number of casualties was not known."

PoWs repatriation almost complete

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Only a few hundred Iraqi prisoners of war (PoWs) remain under allied custody in Saudi Arabia, and they will be repatriated soon, closing one major chapter in the Gulf war which ended in February, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said Sunday.

Michel Schroeder, spokesman for the ICRC in Amman, also implicitly dismissed suggestions that Kuwait's claims that several thousands of its citizens remained in Iraqi detention were holding up the repatriation of PoWs.

"About 60,000 Iraqi PoWs have already been transported home from Saudi Arabia," Mr. Schroeder told the Jordan Times. "A few hundred PoWs remain. And they will be repatriated soon depending on logistical arrangements," he said. "As far as we know there is no specific reason other than transport problems involved in the repatriation process."

Many of those to be repatriated are either sick or wounded, he explained. "Some others have also requested that they be not repatriated," he said and cited an ICRC doctrine that no PoW will be sent home against his or her explicit wish.

Mr. Schroeder could not provide any figure for those who have opted not to go home; media reports have put them between 1,000 and 1,200.

An unknown number of Iraqi soldiers — mostly reservists — is among refugees who fled fighting in southern Iraq to a hitherto American-occupied zone near the border with Kuwait.

Figures attributed to British Defence Ministry sources immediately after the end of the Gulf war said there were over 175,000 Iraqi PoWs in allied hands. This was reduced to about 85,000 by allied spokesmen and further brought down to between 60,000 and 63,000 by the Red Cross.

Red Cross officials are paying regular visits to the PoWs, and the all-Swiss agency is coordinating repatriation efforts with allied and Iraqi authorities, Mr. Schroeder said.

Kuwaiti authorities maintain that "several thousand" Kuwaiti nationals remain missing and suggest that they are in Iraqi detention. Iraq, which sent back 5,060 Kuwaiti prisoners in March as part of the PoW exchange with the allies, says that it has no more Kuwaiti prisoners.

The Red Cross has set up a special committee to trace "missing in action" cases and to retrieve possible remains of those killed in the war.

In addition, the ICRC has also set up presence in Kuwait and its officials continue to visit detainees in Kuwaiti prisons, Mr. Schroeder said.

Camels and ruins — a bleak welcome for U.N. force in Iraq

UMM QASR, Iraq (R) — In no-man's-land on the southern edge of this Iraqi town, soon to host U.N. ceasefire observers, hundreds of camels and dozens of Iraqi residents wander through the ruins of Iraqi army fortifications.

The echoes of U.S. army live-fire exercises to the south roll across the ruined landscape, destroyed in the six-week war for control of Kuwait when U.S.-led multinational forces fired in earnest against Iraqi troops.

Iraqi troops have been told to leave this southern Iraqi port, which the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) has designated the base from which it will monitor the Gulf war ceasefire. The military given its marching orders includes men at a naval base on the Shatt Al Arab waterway.

But for the present, the Iraqi soldiers are still there.

Within sight of an Iraqi army checkpoint at the entrance to the town, dozens of people were loading planks, ammunition boxes, corrugated iron sheets and anything else of value onto pickup trucks, carts and even camels.

Scavenging from the ruins of the military installations, including a training centre with an assault course, appeared to be the main economic activity in the part of town visited by a crew from the world television agency Visnews.

Some residents appeared to have little knowledge that within weeks their town is to be taken over by the blue berets of U.N. forces.

But one man at least welcomed the prospect. Standing by a pickup truck loaded with wooden ammunition boxes, he said: "God willing, we can get back to work. We have produced nothing for months, we can't go on like this."

Another was less informed: "We don't know anything about these United Nations soldiers."

"You must mean the Americans, they are over there," said another, pointing to the south.

The UNIKOM commander, Austrian Major-General Gunter Greindl, said Friday his 1,440-man force, including 300 obser-

vers backed by nearly 700 infantry, would be in place in a matter of weeks.

News that U.N. forces were coming stirred hope among some of the residents that conditions in the town might then improve.

The buildings appear to have escaped widespread war damage, but residents said conditions were difficult.

Water and food are scarce, medical help almost non-existent. "We have not heard about these people coming here," said one woman. "We hope they will help us."

The far eastern end of the demilitarised zone is the tip of a long trail of destruction on the coastal road, stretching from just outside Kuwait City, 90 kilometres to the south.

It is littered with burned-out trucks and tanks, unexploded ammunition and abandoned Iraqi bunkers. The road is little used — a Kuwaiti army jeep and a U.S. army desert truck were the only other traffic.

Unlike the main route from the border to Kuwait City, on which tanks, trucks and other war debris have been bulldozed to the roadside, nothing has been cleared from the two-lane coastal highway in the seven weeks since the Iraqis withdrew from Kuwait.

A dense pall of smoke from burning oilfields to the north fills the air. The allied forces said Iraqi troops set ablaze most of Kuwait's oil wells. Baghdad said allied bombing caused the fires. In several areas, lakes of oil lie by the road.

Naval bombardment by the U.S.-led allies reduced most structures in the area to little more than rubble.

A French-built causeway to the island of Bubiya has been neatly severed at each end by allied air strikes.

A ridge of towering sand dunes runs parallel to the road. Iraqi bunkers and gun emplacements, most destroyed, run along the top of the ridge.

As a falcon flew languidly over the empty desert, it looked in this region as though time has stood still since the war ended.

Iraqi refugee killed in clash with Turkish troops

CUKURCA, Turkey (R) — An Iraqi refugee died after being shot by Turkish soldiers in a border mountain camp Sunday, a Turkish official said.

Five refugees were wounded in the clash between troops and stone-throwing Iraqis. Necdet Ozeroglu, deputy governor of Turkey's eastern Hakkari province, told reporters.

He said the clash broke out when Iraqis attacked soldiers trying to keep order during food distribution to some of the more than 40,000 mainly Kurdish refugees at the camp.

"I saw soldiers firing point-blank into the crowd. It was absolute chaos," said Denis Dameron, who was filming the refugee camp near the border village of Cukurca for BBC Television.

"I got a stone in my back. The troops shot into the air first, but I don't know at what point the

refugees started throwing stones," he told Reuters.

Mr. Ozeroglu, quoted by the semi-official Anatolian news agency, said the troops had been withdrawn from the camp after the shooting and food distribution had been halted.

It is the first time Turkey has announced the death of a refugee from army gunfire in the squalid mountain camps sheltering half a million Iraqis.

The refugees fled after Iraqi forces crushed their rebellion in March.

The refugee, whose name was not given, was hit in the head. Two other badly wounded refugees lay in a medical tent at the edge of the camp, one with his left leg shattered and the other with a bullet hole in his chest.

"They were about to distribute food and the crowd tried to rush the trucks," said a French aid worker.

Bahrain, Poland set for diplomatic ties

BAHRAIN (R) — Bahrain and Poland have decided to establish full diplomatic relations, a Bahrain newspaper reported Sunday. In an uncorroborated report, the usually reliable daily Al Ayam said a joint statement would be issued in Warsaw and Manama on Monday announcing the setting up of ties at ambassadorial level.

Velayati to discuss Kurds with EC leader

BRUSSELS (R) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati will visit Luxembourg Wednesday to discuss the fate of Kurdish refugees in Iran, the Foreign Ministry announced Sunday. He will meet Prime Minister Jacques Santer and Foreign Minister Jacques Poos. Luxembourg currently holds the rotating presidency of the European Community's (EC) Council of Ministers. More than one million refugees have streamed over the Iranian border Tehran says it cannot cope without more international aid. Four Belgian C-130 transport planes left Brussels Sunday for western Iran with aid for Kurdish refugees, the national news agency Belga said. The military aircraft, carrying 38 paratroopers and a medical detachment, with take tents, beds, blankets and medical supplies to be distributed to Kurdish refugees there by groups working with the European Community. Belgium's council of ministers decided Friday against sending troops into northern Iraq to help set up safe havens for Kurdish refugees. Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens said it would think again if it received a formal request from the United Nations.

Oman counties pick assembly candidates

NICOSIA (R) — Leaders in Oman's 59 counties began choosing candidates Sunday for elections to a consultative assembly, the first in the sultanate's history. The Omani News Agency (ONA) said each county was selecting three candidates to stand in popular elections for its representative in the planned parliament. The government would appoint the speaker. No election date has been announced. "The nomination sessions will be held without any interference by the government," Interior Minister Badr Ben Saoud Ben Hareb said. "Prominent personalities and notables in each county will hold open discussions to choose three candidates," he was quoted as saying by the agency, received in Cyprus. The nominating sessions would be completed by Tuesday and the Interior Ministry expects to receive the final lists of candidates by mid-May, he added. Oman's ruler Sultan Qaboos announced plans for formation of a consultative assembly last November. Oman at present has a state consultative council with 52 members appointed by the government.

Egyptian minister heads for Morocco

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's minister of state for foreign affairs, Boutros Ghali, left Sunday for Morocco to discuss regional affairs. A Foreign Ministry official said Dr. Ghali was carrying a message from President Hosni Mubarak to King Hassan concerning Middle East peace efforts, the Gulf situation and bilateral relations. The official gave no other details.

Kuwait's first human rights group emerges in war's aftermath

By Greg Myre
The Associated Press

KUWAIT CITY — The head of Kuwait's first human rights group, Ghanim Al Najjar, began his work by documenting war atrocities and searching for thousands of missing compatriots.

That huge effort remains unfinished, but Mr. Najjar is already tackling a new and more controversial task: Fighting to prevent abuses against Palestinians and others targeted by Kuwaitis in revenge attacks.

At a suburban house converted into an office, the Kuwait Association to Defend War Victims started operations last month by compiling a gruesome display of torture tools, weapons and photos to illustrate the seven-month Iraqi occupation.

In addition, the association has gathered the names of some 5,000 Kuwaitis who remain missing. Many are believed to be in Iraq,

some are almost certainly dead. Mr. Najjar, a professor at Kuwait University, won wide support and attracted hundreds of volunteers for his efforts expose abuses.

He entered much more delicate territory when he began raising the question of human rights violations by Kuwaitis against Palestinians and others suspected of collaborating with the Iraqis during the occupation.

"Most Kuwaitis are peace-loving," said Mr. Najjar, who has a master's degree in political science from the University of Pittsburgh. "But our image has been hurt by the irresponsible behaviour of a small number of people."

Amnesty International, the London-based human rights group, said Thursday that since Kuwait's liberation on Feb. 27, scores of people had been killed by the security forces and resistance groups. Hundreds more have been arbitrarily arrested,

many of whom have been tortured, the group said.

"Their scale and persistence threaten to leave an indelible stain on Kuwait's human rights record," Amnesty International said.

The government has not formally responded to the amnesty report.

Kuwaiti government officials have repeatedly said they will not tolerate abuses. But Abdul Aziz Al Dakhlil, under-secretary in the Ministry of Justice, said recently he knew of no one arrested for carrying out a revenge attack since Kuwait was liberated by the U.S.-led allied coalition at the end of February.

In the first days following liberation, resistance fighters boasted of beating suspected Iraqi collaborators and proudly displayed victims with swollen faces to journalists. Most of the victims have been Palestinians, along with some Jordanians, Egyptians

and Sudanese.

Through contacts with the ruling Al Sabah family, Mr. Najjar was able to arrange a meeting with Crown Prince Saad Al Abdullah Al Sabah and raised the issue of the torture of detainees.

The U.S. and British governments, along with other human rights groups such as Middle East Watch, also have spoken out against abuses.

By all accounts, the revenge attacks and abuses against detainees have been declining as order is restored to the government and military.

Asked if detainees were still tortured Mr. Najjar said, "I think it has decreased greatly."

But many Palestinians say they still fear random detentions and beatings at the hands of vigilantes or rogue elements of the security forces.

An Associated Press reporters was interviewing a Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO)

official at the PLO office recently when men wearing military uniforms and driving a security force vehicle sprayed the building with automatic gunfire.

Mr. Najjar said the government has encouraged his efforts, and a recent interview at his office was interrupted briefly by a friendly visit from the crown prince's son.

The association remains concerned about the status of more than 600 detainees expected to face martial law trials shortly for alleged collaboration with Iraq and other crimes.

The association has gained permission to visit the detainees on an almost daily basis at the Al Adhath prison on the outskirts of Kuwait City. The volunteers have been calling the families of detainees, many of whom feared their relatives had been killed.

Mr. Dakhlil, the justice ministry official, says suspects will be tried individually and those accused of serious crimes will face a

First post-war Arabic daily hits Kuwait streets

KUWAIT CITY (AP) — For the first time since Iraq's invasion, a full-scale daily newspaper went on sale here Saturday. It carried an interview with the information minister saying press censorship remained in effect.

The New Dawn, which printed about 20,000 copies of its inaugural, 12-page edition, is the first daily since liberation on Feb. 27 to receive government permission to publish.

A handful of weeklies appeared last month, produced on copying machines and limited to a few thousand copies per issue. The one with the highest profile, February 26, was ordered closed by the government on March 19 because it refused to accept censorship.

The New Dawn carried an interview with the Information Minister Badr Jassem Al Yaqoub, who said press censorship would remain in effect until a new press law was adopted. He gave no indication when that might happen.

Other front-page articles reported on U.S. congressional denunciations of Iraq and on expectations that a new Kuwaiti cabinet would be named imminently.

The New Dawn's publisher is Youssef Al Olayan, head of the Kuwaiti Journalists Association and former publisher of the one

of the emirate's two English-language dailies, the Kuwait Times.

The new paper, written in Arabic, is being printed on the Kuwait Times presses. Seven of the nine large printing presses in Kuwait City are missing.

Mr. Olayan said his paper was privately owned and would espouse a "moderate" viewpoint.

"I don't believe in criticism for criticism's sake," he said.

He said the newspaper would practise self-censorship and there would be no government censor assigned to the newspaper.

Press censorship was imposed in 1986, when the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, also suspended the constitution and dissolved parliament.

Saturday's edition contained no reports on the pro-democracy movement that has been pressuring the government for change. Many of the articles recounted tales of "atrocities" committed by the Iraqis during the seven-month occupation.

The edition contained no advertisements, reflecting the shattered state of private enterprise. It sold for the standard pre-invasion newspaper price of 100 fils (about 33 cents).

Reporters at the paper said no wire services were yet available, and they were relying on radio reports for their foreign news.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO	TIME
18:00	La Belle Anglaise
19:00	News in French
19:15	Weekly Sports Magazine
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
20:30	Empty Nest
21:10	Inside Story
22:00	News in English
22:20	Derrick

PRAYER TIMES

04:32	Fajr
06:55	(Sunrise) Dhuhr
11:34	Dhuhr
16:12	Asr
19:13	Maghreb
20:36	Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swifeth Tel. 810730
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 642990
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasano Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
Syrian Orthodox Church Tel. 771751
Assyrian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 815817, 654932
The Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A rise in temperatures will take place and winds will be southeasterly fresh, causing dust in the southern and eastern parts of the Kingdom. In Amman, it will be relatively hot and dusty with southerly fresh wind and wavy seas.

AMMAN	Min./Max. temp.
Amman	15 / 29
Aqaba	18 / 36
Desert	14 / 33
Jordan Valley	17 / 34

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 26, Aqaba 36, Humidity readings: Amman 28 per cent, Aqaba 18 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Joseph Insh 770560
Dr. Khalid Eida 67129
Dr. Hisham Abu Argoub 893122
Dr. Youssef Al Hourani 625477
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Aqana pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 626372
Al Salam pharmacy 630730
Yacoub pharmacy 649455
Shmeisani pharmacy 637640

IRBID:
Dr. Mohammad Al Za'ra (—)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 608900
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage (—)
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality (—)

AMMAN:

Al Shama pharmacy 275825
ZARQA:
Dr. Nashed Amari (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

COMPLAINTS

Telephone Information 787111
Directorate assistance 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone (—)
Repairs 623101
Abdullah Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power (—)
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-32300
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-33200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Humaid Medical Centre 81381332
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Atikah Maternity, J. Amn. 642442
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malha, J. Amman 636140
Pakadine, Shmeisani 6641714

Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital 6672279
The Islamic, Abdali 6601277
Al-Ahli, Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Mubajrac 7771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 7751126
Army, Malha 89161115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224050
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Gov. Hospital (09)983333
Zarqa National Hospital (09)91071
The Sina Hospital (09)986732

IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Zarqa National Hospital (09)91071
The Sina Hospital (09)986732

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

TIME	FROM
10:15	Jeddah, Samaa (RJ)
10:20	Dhahran (RJ)
10:45	Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
11:00	Larnaca, Damascus (RJ)
11:45	Riyadh (RJ)
15:00	Cairo (RJ)
19:00	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

TIME	FROM
17:00	Bahrain (GF)
20:05	Cairo (MS)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

TIME	TO
12:00	Riyadh (RJ)
12:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:45	Cairo (RJ)
20:45	Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:50	Dubai, Muscat (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

TIME	TO
14:50	Bahrain (GF)
20:55	Cairo (MS)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

APPLE	PRICE
Banana	850 / 750
Banana (Mukannam)	450 / 400
Bons	400 / 300

JANDA elects secretariat

AMMAN (J.T.) — The 25-member Executive Bureau of the Jordan Arab National Democratic Alliance (JANDA) held a meeting Sunday to elect the alliance's general secretariat. The secretariat comprises five representatives of the political organisations and parties that make up the alliance and three independents.

Expected to represent the mainly leftist and pan-Arab national political organisations and parties in the secretariat are: Salem Nahhas from the Peoples Democratic Party, Walid Al Ahmad, from Fateh, the mainstream faction of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), Amal Nafia from the Communist Party, Azmi Al Khawaja for the Jordan organisation affiliated with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and

Ahmad Al Najdawi for the pro-Iraq Baath Party.

The independent members are expected to be Mamdouh Al Abbadi, president of the doctors association Fares Nabulsi, a member of Parliament, and Bahjat Abu Gharbieh, a prominent political activist.

The Executive Bureau groups eight Parliament members from the Democratic Alliance and 17 people from various political parties and organisations. During Sunday night's meeting, JANDA was also expected to discuss the situation in the south of the Kingdom in the aftermath of the floods that swept the area in March and means of channelling assistance to the people who were affected by the floods.

Muslim Brotherhood attacks U.S. Mideast peace moves

AMMAN (R) — Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood on Sunday denounced U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's efforts to bring Israel and its Arab foes to the negotiating table and warned Arab leaders against following him.

"This so-called peace that Baker is advocating is only a ploy to subjugate the Umma (Islamic nation) and make its population pass time by running after the mirage of a peaceful solution when America and its allies continue to support the Jewish state's military arsenal," the movement said in a statement.

"We warn the leaders and people of our Umma against being

fooled by such fake solutions."

Mr. Baker is touring the region for the third time since the end of the Gulf war to promote a regional peace conference.

The Muslim Brotherhood, the largest single bloc in Jordan's Lower House of Parliament, repeated its call for Islamic Jihad (holy war) as the only means to liberate Palestine.

Mr. Baker visited Jordan on Saturday and held what he termed fruitful talks with King Hussein.

U.S. officials say he has so far been unable to reconcile Arab and Israeli views, but he is due to return to Israel at midweek for further talks.

Tomato harvest drops this year — ministry

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Agriculture does not expect a normal tomato harvest this year, and production at the former level might be resumed by October this year.

This was revealed by Minister of Agriculture Mohammad Al Alawneh at a meeting with the local press in his office Sunday.

Four reasons are behind the shortage of the tomato crop this year, according to the minister: a virus which has affected the crop in the Jordan Valley, salinity in the water used for irrigating the farmlands, shortage in the nurseries' production of safe saplings to be distributed to the farmers in addition to the fact that Jordan is going through a transitional period, between the winter and the summer seasons, which means little production of tomatoes and other vegetables and which explains the present soaring prices of tomatoes in the local market.

He said that measures were being taken to deal with the problem of saplings and pesticides would be used to deal with the virus. Measures would be also taken to redress salinity problem and to ensure normal production in October.

Last week, the Jordan Valley

Authority (JVA) issued a report about the water situation in the Jordan Valley, which produces most of the country's vegetables and other crops, noting that only 40 per cent of the total capacity of dams in the Kingdom has been replenished by the past rainy season.

Between April and October 1991, said the report, the Jordan Valley fields are expected to receive only 128 million cubic metres of water, constituting only 81 per cent of the total amounts made available to the farmlands in 1990.

The report said that the Jordan Valley region was in need of 171 million cubic metres of water between April and October and that meant that vegetables would be grown on less lots of the farmlands.

The report pointed out that land used for vegetables would be reduced by at least 25 per cent of the total area normally grown with vegetables and trees.

It also noted that the (JVA) intended to re-exploit three artesian wells, untouched since 1984, in order to make available eight million cubic metres of water annually. The artesian wells are located at Tabaqat Fahel, Waqqas and Abu Ziyad.



EXHIBITION INAUGURATION: An international building exhibition, organised by the Engineering and Technology Faculty at the University of Jordan, was opened Sunday at Goethe Institute in Amman. On display for three days are architectural and engineering drawings depicting the work of architects and engineers from Germany and other countries for the reconstruction of the city of Berlin following the Second World War. The drawing and designs also depict residential areas, services centres as well as gardens.

cultural and social centres in Berlin. The exhibition, which was opened by University President Mahmoud Al Samra, aims at orienting Jordanian engineers and engineering students on modern German architectural designs. The designs and drawings were displayed in several countries since 1987, according to the organisers. Deans and university students were present at the opening ceremony as well as officials from the Goethe Institute in Amman.

Visiting German Social Democrats stress need for finding just solutions to region's issues

Deputies say Arab- Israeli conflict caused by occupation, expansionism

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Lower House of Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee Ahmad Innab Sunday said that the Arab-Israeli conflict was caused by the Israeli occupation of Arab territories and the denial of the inalienable, legitimate rights of the Palestinian people.

During a meeting with two visiting members of the German Social Democratic Party, who are currently on a visit to Jordan, Mr. Innab said that Israel was pursuing its expansionist policy and its inhuman practices against the Palestinian people.

He said that Israel was continuing its occupation of Arab territories and was evicting Palestinian people from their homeland, thus violating international legitimacy.

He added that the aid provided by the West to Israel had helped it pursue its expansionist policies, ignoring all international resolutions affirming the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Members of the committee said that the problems of the Arab region could be attributed to the "split and dominate policy" which the Western imperialists have imposed on the Arab region dividing it into statelets.

The committee members, including Issa Madanat, Abdul Hafith Alawi, Said Haddadin and

Mohammad Abu Alim, called for the elimination of mass destruction arms in the whole region and not only in one particular country.

They noted that the applications of such a decision to one country, rather than the whole region, was doomed to create imbalance in the region and leave it in a state of continuous conflict.

The deputies pointed out that the Gulf war had resulted in environmental, social and economic problems which demand great efforts and funds to address.

The German visitors said their party had never taken side with any party to the conflict, but had adopted a well-balanced policy, taking into consideration the region's interests and stressing the need for finding a just solution to

the region's pending issues.

They said that the party fully recognised the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to establish an independent state on its national soil.

They summed up their party's position on vis-a-vis the elimination of mass destruction weapons by saying the party believed that such arms should be eliminated from all countries without any exception.

They said that the spread of such arms precluded the establishment of genuine peace and security in the region.

The German delegation's visit to Jordan is part of a fact-finding tour which will take them to a number of countries in the region, including the occupied West Bank.

Jordan to attend Cairo meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan will take part in the 30th meeting of the Afro-Asian Legal Consultancy Committee due to open in Cairo on Monday. The session is scheduled to discuss in its six-day meetings several issues pertaining to bilateral cooperation in legal assistance, judicial immunity, and preparations for the United Nations conference on the environment. Representing Jordan at the meetings will be a delegation led by Minister of Justice Majid Khalifah who left Amman for Cairo Saturday.

Deir Bani Said donates aid to Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — Deir Bani Said citizens donated food for Iraq. The relief aid convoy of trucks laden with sugar, rice, milk and canned food Sunday left for Baghdad.

Taiwan sends more aid to Jordan

AMMAN (J.T.) — A further shipment of humanitarian aid presented by Taiwan to the Kingdom of Jordan will arrive to Aqaba Port on Wednesday, April 24, 1991, on board the vessel Ken Gale.

The shipment consists of 15,000 metric tonnes of polished white rice in 300,000 bags, worth \$6 million and 60,000 woolen blankets worth \$2.5 million.

This aid had been pledged to Jordan during the Gulf crisis on Taiwan's own initiative and in view of difficulties encountered by Jordan due to the flow of refugees and the economic sanctions imposed on Iraq by the United Nations.

Taiwan has already donated \$1.5 million to the Expatriates Welfare Committee in September of last year, making the total of humanitarian aid donated \$10 million.

Financial aid, worth \$10 million was also granted to the government of Jordan in November 1990 to support the Jordanian economy.

Jordan turns major logistic base for ICRC aid to Iraq

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan has become the centre of almost all international Red Cross relief operations for Iraq, whether for victims of the Gulf war or internal rebellions, a senior Red Cross official said Sunday.

Michel Schroeder, spokesman for the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Amman, said most of a major relief operation for Kurdish refugees clustered around the Iraq-Iranian border was being directed and channelled through Jordan.

Two ICRC convoys — a total of 49 vehicles — carrying chlorine, diesel, gasoline, kerosene, rice, cement, blankets and kitchen sets as well as a "camp module" designed to accommodate 30,000 to 40,000 people left Jordan for Iraq on Friday and Saturday, and more supplies are being organised, Mr. Schroeder said.

These were the 16th and 17th ICRC shipments to Iraq through Jordan since March 1, and took the total volume to over 3,000 tonnes.

"Jordan is the main logistic rear base for our relief operations," he said. The flow of relief supplies from Tehran to the Iraqi-Iranian border continues, "but the main thrust is from the Kingdom from the west," he added.

What Mr. Schroeder left unsaid was that mutual mistrust between Baghdad and Tehran has made it difficult for relief supplies to be organised

through Iran. Furthermore, the distance between various refugee concentrations on the border and Baghdad is shorter when compared with Tehran.

Around one million Iraqis are believed to be stranded near the border with Iran after fleeing the violence in Kurdistan.

On the surface, it will appear that it is easier to send relief supplies from Tehran to the refugees on the border, but the geographic features of the mountainous area and the negative political undercurrents between Tehran and Baghdad make it more feasible to direct and channel the effort from the Iraqi side of the border, experts pointed out.

"The Iraqis are highly suspicious of the Iranians these days," commented an expert on Iraqi affairs who returned to Amman this week. "They believe that the Iranians used relief convoys to send in infiltrators into Iraq to stir up the Shiite rebellion in the south as well as the Kurdish unrest in the north," said the expert, insisting on anonymity.

The ICRC recently issued an international appeal for help for Iraqi refugees and in response many national Red Crescent societies sent relief supplies by air and land to Tehran, where the ICRC is closely coordinating with the Iranian Red Crescent. But the main problem here, said one of the experts, is that many Iraqi officials believe that Iranian Red Crescent convoys did in fact carry infiltrators and arms

and ammunition for Iraqi insurgents.

At least two military airports near Baghdad are operational, but many airline charter companies are refusing to land in Iraq, apparently fearing bad ground-to-air communications. This has warranted most relief supplies to be unloaded at Jordanian airports and sent overland to Iraq.

More than 260 ICRC delegates are involved in relief operations for Iraqis. Mr. Schroeder said. The ICRC set up seven camps within Iranian territory, a few kilometres from the Iraqi border, which runs about 1,200 kilometres from Shalamchah in the south near Basra, to Piranshahr in the Kurdish heartland in the north.

In addition, some of the ICRC supplies for Iraq are also sent across the border from Syria. In theory, the Syrian-Iraqi border in the northwest remains closed for civilian traffic, but ICRC convoys are allowed through, Mr. Schroeder said.

The ICRC has issued appeals for a total of 180 million Swiss francs (about \$127 million) for its Iraq relief effort, while the United Nations is seeking \$178 million on its own for the same purpose. No definite figures have been released of the amounts spent by the U.S. and allies to set up their own distribution networks and establish the so-called "safe havens" for Iraqi refugees in northern Iraq.

Studies on oil shale exploitation to be revised

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources is directing its attention to the exploitation of oil shale, estimated at 36 billion tonnes in Jordan, in order to produce oil.

A statement Sunday said that Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Thabit Al-Tajer had ordered the reformation of a committee to revise and analyse earlier studies conducted on the prospect of exploiting shale, which is found in abundance in several regions of Jordan, particularly at Lajjun, in the south.

The statement said that the studies were designed to pave the ground for a national strategy to exploit the shale and produce oil, which is now imported at international market rates from Syria and Yemen, in view of the U.N.

imposed trade embargo on Iraq.

The last studies and analysis conducted on the oil shale found in Jordan occurred in 1988 when the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), which is responsible for generating power, shipped samples of the Jordanian shale to Germany where they underwent tests at a centre based in Frankfurt.

JEA then reported that the tests, conducted on 72 tonnes of shale, yielded encouraging results. JEA said then that billions of tonnes of oil shale existing in deposits not very deep below the earth's surface and their exploitation was feasible since they lie near power generation units.

Following the discovery of natural gas at Rishbeh, near the Iraqi border, JEA has transferred

power generator units to a site near the field and has been producing electric power through gas-driven turbines.

In the coming year, JEA estimates that 25 per cent of the total power consumed in Jordan would be produced in this manner.

Jordan is estimated to be consuming up to 22 million barrels of crude oil annually, much of which it used to import at reduced rates from Iraq in repayment for debt incurred during the Iran-Iraq war. But the bombing raids on Jordanian oil tankers during the Gulf war has stopped oil supplies to the Kingdom from Iraq, forcing the country to buy a \$7.5 million oil tanker, with a total capacity of 100,000 tonnes of crude, to be docked in Aqaba for oil mostly bought from Yemen.



AGRICULTURAL EXHIBITION OPENS: Deputy Dean of the Agriculture Faculty at the University of Jordan Bassam Snobar Sunday opened the 10th agricultural exhibition on the university campus. The week-long event displays samples of drugs and fertilisers used for agricultural production and for plant diseases in addition to scientific books and periodicals.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITION

— The International Building Exhibition at the University of Jordan.

LECTURE

— Lecture on architecture by Prof. Dr. Eng. Jan Cejka entitled "Old and New, Harmony or Contradiction" at the University of Jordan 12 noon.

FILM

— French film entitled "Le vol d'Icare" at the French Cultural Centre — 8:00 p.m.

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AMMAN	22. 00	PARIS	05. 30

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
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MAHMOUD AL KAYED

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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Sooner than later

THE WINDS of change blowing in Kuwait are indicative of an irreversible process which will have to be accepted by the Gulf states that have known very little of democratic norms and popular participation in decision-making since their emergence from the colonial era.

There is but only one direction for the process: the acceptance by the rulers of the fact that there cannot be any escape from recognising the reality that it is no longer viable to hold on to absolute power as the case has been for centuries in the Arab World. The Arabs are gradually waking up, realising that they cannot let a handful of people control their lives while they themselves have no say in the matter.

The vehement opposition voiced by democratic activists to the new cabinet in Kuwait is the manifestation of the Arab awareness of the importance of having a role in running their country and not to let misguided or inefficient people run it for them. Obviously, some of the Gulf rulers do not feel confident enough to let their subjects have a share in power, but then that is a turn that they have to take if they entertain hopes of continued power themselves.

It is not simply a question of power neither; the very experience that the Kuwaiti people had when they were faced with their emergency needs in the immediate post-war era showed how top bureaucrats and ministers could grossly miscalculate and misjudge the priorities of the country and its people. It was more a matter of being down to earth. And down-to-earth people come only from the ranks and files.

The lessons to be learnt from what is taking place in Kuwait are many. But above everything, the fact stands out that no country can survive successfully in today's world without allowing its people to have a major say on how their lives are run.

The sooner the Gulf rulers accept this fact, the better for them and their people.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IN his talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, King Hussein reiterated the Arab stand and Jordan's commitment to seek a just and peaceful settlement to the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Palestine problem, said Al Ra'i Arabic daily Sunday. At the end of the talks the King expressed hope that the talks would usher in the first step towards the peace making process in the region, describing the meeting with Baker as very useful and fruitful, the paper said. In contrast, Baker heard different views in Israel which continues to reject the idea of swapping land for peace and continues to mislead world public opinion, the paper noted. It said that it seems that Baker's statement that he does not want to impose a peace formula on the region was interpreted as a green light for Israel to pursue the construction of Jewish settlements and hold on to the Arab land. So, Israel's intransigent stand will continue to abort all U.S. initiatives and will definitely foil Washington's declared aim of achieving peace based on U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, the paper added. What is required now is for the U.S. Secretary of State to make it clear to the Israeli leaders that Washington is serious in its drive to implement the council's resolutions and so force Israel to succumb to the international community's will and abide by the U.N. principles and comply with the requirements of peace.

It is not true that Jordan will not be facing a chronic water problem until the end of the present century simply because the problem is with us now, and it will most prominently present itself this summer in the agricultural sector which will become its first victim, says a columnist in Al Ra'i Arabic daily Sunday. This year's rainfall filled up to 40 per cent of the total capacity of dams in Jordan, which gets only very little water from the Yarmouk River that is already exploited by Syria, and the water from the River Jordan is fully exploited by Israel which draws the water to the desert for its agricultural projects there, says Fahd Al Fanek. On the eastern side, Saudi Arabia continues to draw water from underground aquifers to feed its farmlands, thus leaving Jordan sucked out of its own water resources for its own projects, the writer notes. Jordan, he says, is thus deprived of its rightful share of the water resources at a time when it receives very little rain water and faces growing needs to irrigate its dry lands. The writer notes that the Ministry of Agriculture has made it clear it would not provide water for those lands growing vegetables in the Jordan Valley, a move which will negatively affect Jordan's exports, the writer adds. Indeed, the government is giving priority to water for drinking purposes while the second priority goes to the industry with agriculture left as a third priority, Fanek says. He echoes earlier warnings by water experts that the coming wars in the Middle East would be over water resources, and that no peace can be established in the area unless the water problem has been resolved.

Genuine and widespread democratisation necessary to build bridges among internal forces in Iraq

By Lamis Andoni

THE IRAQI ARMY'S successful crushing of armed rebellions in the north and the south has reasserted Baghdad's control over the country. But the bloody battles have revealed for the Iraqis the depth of internal divisions that nearly tore the country apart.

For the time being, the central government has achieved two important goals — it has kept Iraq as one geographic entity and crippled the opposition. But short of continued violence and repression, only a genuine and widespread democratisation process can protect Iraq from similar eruptions in the future, say observers and ordinary Iraqis.

From the government's viewpoint, the two objectives were crucial to fending off foreign, particularly Iranian, intervention in the country's internal affairs and foiling attempts to divide Iraq.

Baghdad's problems appear to be far from final solution as the recent events in the north and the south have actually widened the gap among the central ruling Baathist leadership, the Kurds and the Shi'ites.

The fact that Baghdad, and the central area in general, has not joined the rebellion had contributed to preventing it from turning into a nation-wide uprising.

Judging by interviews with ordinary Iraqis and prominent intellectuals in the capital, it was fear of the sectarian nature of the insurgency in the south and the ethnic rebellion in the north that discouraged the Sunni majority in the centre from revolting.

The absence of a national, grassroots support and organisation for the opposition groups had also curtailed the spread of the rebellion. Furthermore, the lack of unity among the opposition factions (in the north and the south) weakened it as a viable alternative national leadership that could lead a broad-based uprising across Iraq.

For although the various groups called for the overthrow of the regime and the setting up of a democratic government in Baghdad, political graffiti in the southern and northern cities, that were left behind by the rebels reflected a clash of interests among the rebels.

In the south, for example, the graffiti was dominantly religious and even sectarian in nature. The rallying slogan in the south would have failed in securing the support of the Kurds or the Sunnis. "There is no imam but Ali; we want a Shi'ite leader," was the main political slogan in the south, according to residents of Basra and Karbala.

'Iranian role'

Residents also confirmed the presence of Iranians among the rebel leaders giving credence to government claims that Tehran was trying to set up a pro-Iranian Islamic government in the south.

There is also evidence that the pro-Iranian fundamentalists were also competing with the predominantly secular opposition to control the northern cities and villages. Although there were pro-Iranian (Al Daawa and Hizbollah) slogans in Arabic and Persian in the major northern cities, religious influence seemed stronger in the rural areas.

There was almost exclusively Islamic graffiti on the walls of damaged mud and brick houses of the Kurdish villages across the highway between Kirkuk and Sulaimaniyah. Damaged houses, burned vehicles, and corpses that littered the sideways and the green meadows indicated fierce battles as the army had apparently chased the Peshmerga (Kurdish militias) from all groups out of the oil rich Kirkuk province.

Although the opposition in the north was not strictly Kurdish — the Iraqi Communist Party is by no means ethnic — it has failed to set up a leadership with a national programme during its almost two-week-old control of the main Kurdish cities which could have served as a base for an all-out revolution.

Initially the opposition used Radio Free Iraq — somewhat successfully — to convey its message to the Iraqis. But the fact that the radio was Saudi-based eventually backfired as many, especially in Baghdad, resented the opposition's growing association with the U.S. and its Arab allies.

"The opposition has been a real disappointment. It is not only

that they live in the comfort of London and Damascus, away from the suffering of the Iraqi people, they have completely become dependent on anti-democratic governments like Syria and Saudi Arabia," said a female artist whose brother is a prominent figure in the opposition.

The failure of the rebellion and the opposition's links with foreign countries might have weakened its support in Baghdad — which has historically led anti-government revolutions — but that does not mean that wide popular discontent has been dampened. For even if the rebellion was foreign-backed, the fact remains that it involved widespread anti-government protests that the leadership cannot afford to ignore.

War's impact and 'negligence'

The unrest — in the south in particular — was a protest against repression and economic deprivation which was aggravated by the vast destruction inflicted by the allies. The damage of the major bridges on the Baghdad-Basra Highway had deepened an already existing feeling — among the southern Iraqis — of negligence by the central government in Baghdad.

These grievances were capitalised on by the Iranian-backed rebels, who according to residents of Basra, promised food, jobs and an end to the one-party system.

Soon after the fighting stopped, the Baathist Party leadership was the first to publicly acknowledge that unequal status of socio-economic conditions — in the various areas of Iraq especially in the south — was a major factor in fuelling discontent and facilitating Iranian intervention.

In a series of five long articles, the party's organ, Al Thawra, admitted that the party had failed in effecting deep and fundamental changes in some areas giving way to the rise of sectarian exploits.

"The party has effected vertical socio-economic development but has failed to realise horizontal development," the newspaper said.

Consequently, according to the same article, the party had failed to fill "the social gap." The "gap" was manifested in the resurfacing of sectarian and backward social structures and phenomena which shocked many Iraqis, including party loyalists.

"We discovered that many of the backward phenomena have not disappeared but were suppressed," a Baathist official in Baghdad said.

For example the riots gave rise to a social stratum — which was believed to have been totally undermined by the 1968 Baathist revolution. This is a group of Shi'ite notables who had apparently joined the rebels to get back into the system again.

Al Thawra articles admitted that Al Saeed — a Shi'ite who is supposedly or is claimed to be a "descendant of Imam Ali, proved to still have influence in some areas in southern Iraq.

In other words, the power vacuum, combined with popular discontent and foreign intervention, unleashed many suppressed forces, according to analysts.

"It is one of our failures. We should have tried to accommodate and understand the clergy instead of trying to suppress these movements as reactionary," one Baathist said.

Although the continuation of international sanctions against Iraq will make it difficult for Baghdad to properly address the needs of all of the areas outside Baghdad, officials admit that a beginning of decentralisation and democratisation process can help ease off the pressure.

Baathist officials in Baghdad appear to be aware that the government cannot go back to the heavy-handed approach and that democratisation should involve local and municipal elections and a reassignment of the role of the party's local organisations.

In all of the major cities during the rebellion, organised rebels and angry residents burned down all of the symbols of the state: government offices, courts, civil administration buildings, and Baathist Party headquarters. Baathist officials and intelligence officers were rounded up and sometimes executed on the spot, according to eyewitnesses.

Arabs, Turkmans and even Kurds in the north complained that in some cases even civil servants were harassed and threatened. The same was reported by Shi'ite civil servants in the south. "We fled from the rebels because my brothers are in the party," said 18-year-old Sana Daher, a Shi'ite from Basra. "I was harassed and asked to leave Kirkuk because I work for the government-run oil refinery," said Adel Abdullah, a Kurd who was afraid of retaliation by the rebels.

Tribal feuds

If anything, the scale of retribution (grisly methods were used in the south) largely reflected the accumulated anger and frustration against what many viewed as a repressive system.

But in a society where belonging to family or clan still shapes social and political behaviour, political retribution triggered tribal feuds further deepening simmering internal divisions.

In some cases in the south, what started as political retribution extended to family members and relatives from the same clan.

The army's use of heavy force — the government argues that it had no alternative to prevent the fragmentation of the country — had also deepened Kurdish and Shi'ite alienation from the central government.

In Basra and Karbala — host cities to two of the most holiest Shi'ite shrines — residents appeared defiant, at least in their looks — as they passed checkpoints manned by soldiers and tanks in the two cities.

The Iraqi army's shelling of the holy shrines in Najaf and Karbala, where the rebels took sanctuary and tortured Baathist officials, is likely to leave a deep scar between the Baathist and religious Shi'ite, including even those who did not support the rebellion.

Although damage in the cities in the north was minimal compared with the almost total destruction of Basra and Karbala in the south, the fact that the Kurdish population fled as soon as the rebels warned them that the army was coming, tells a lot of about the lost confidence in the government.

This reporter saw thousands of Kurdish families on their way back to Kirkuk and Sulaimaniyah, when they realised that the army had not resorted to gas or chemical weapons.

Yet, according to analysts, and even some Baathist officials, unless the government seriously seeks national reconciliation through a genuine democratisation process, the fragmentation of Iraq — with or without foreign intervention — remains real.

Over the last three weeks the government has given some signals of readiness for national reconciliation and seriousness about the democratisation process. Officials have said that the liberalisation will involve free parliamentary and even presidential elections.

But an important indication has been the repeated general amnesty granted to the Kurds who fled the army or those who had joined the rebellion.

There were no similar gestures made to the Shi'ites but government attempts to mend the fences with Tehran could pave the way for easing the tension in the south.

The leadership is clearly trying to strip the U.S. and its allies of a potential political card to prevent foreign intervention in Iraq, but officials admit that without serious and fundamental structural changes the internal situation would remain vulnerable.

Analysts in Baghdad argue that the leadership is now in a stronger position to extend its hand to the opposition in exile, especially that many Kurds — and even fundamentalist rebels in the south — feel let down by Washington.

"By doing this the leadership will prevent the opposition from playing into foreign hands and will expose these parties' lack of broad national base," one analyst said. But by doing so the leadership will also put the Baathist Party to the real test.

The writer, a Jordan Times Staff Reporter, covered the Gulf war from Baghdad and has since returned to Iraq twice.

Palestine Central Council meets

(Continued from page 1)

Syria's ruling Baath Party, and Ahmad Jibril's Damascus-based Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command, have not shown up for the meeting.

Mr. Hourani said the council meeting would also pave the way for a gathering of the Palestine National Council.

It was also considering ways of integrating into the PLO-led unified leadership of the uprising two Islamic Palestinian movements in the occupied territories, Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

Meanwhile Syria-based Palestinian factions are closing ranks against Mr. Baker's peace mission and want a new leadership for the PLO, one of their leaders said Sunday.

Abdul Hadi Nashash, spokesman for the Fateh Uprising group opposed to Mr. Arafat, told Reuters seven groups including Abu Nidal's Fateh Revolutionary Council worked out joint strategy at meetings in Damascus over the last few days.

He said the views of the seven groups would be relayed to the PCC meeting in Tunis by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

The talks are believed to be the first for years involving the Abu Nidal group. The PFLP-GC also took part in the talks.

Also there was Islamic Jihad, Mr. Nashash said.

"Before talking about Palestinian moves on peace efforts the PLO should be reorganised on democratic basis that would ensure the adoption of correct decisions on the Arab-Israeli conflict," Mr. Nashash said.

Mr. Nashash said he believed the U.S. "was not serious about pressing on Israel to bring peace to the Middle East."

"Washington is refusing to press on Israel to withdraw from occupied Arab territories..."

"It is dealing with the Palestinian problem with double standards because it is refusing to exert the same efforts which led to the liberation of Kuwait to liberate occupied Arab lands and bring peace to the Middle East," he added.

Mr. Nashash also spoke of an offer for dialogue with the PLO made by four anti-Arafat factions, including his own, which are grouped in the Palestine National Salvation Front (PNSF).

Mr. Nashash said the PFLP would raise the issue at the PCC meeting in Tunis.

Epidemics

feared in Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

Iraq to feed itself. If not, it will be the international community that will have to foot the bill for prolonged emergency aid," he added.

Prince Aga Khan signed an accord in Baghdad Thursday to ensure "safety and relief" for refugees crowding Iraq's borders with Turkey and Iran.

Referring to the decision by the United States, Britain and France to send troops into northern Iraq to set up protected zones for refugees, he said: "I was frightened the decision would scupper the agreement but it was signed all the same."

He said he hoped the refugee camps set up by allied forces in northern Iraq would be taken over "as soon as possible" by civilian U.N. relief workers.

Allied countries had assured Iraq through diplomatic channels that the relief action was not a violation of Iraq's territorial integrity, he added.

Letter from New Mexico

By Kathleen Christison
Middle East International

THE SETTING is at once so isolated from the Middle East as to be incongruously ill-suited for a seminar on the area, and yet so reminiscent of the Middle East terrain that meeting here is entirely fitting. It is a sprawling place called Ghost Ranch, located among the red-tinged mesas of the state of New Mexico, where the artist Georgia O'Keeffe took her inspiration and Presbyterian Church now runs a study centre.

The occasion is a week-long seminars on theology's role in resolving the Israel-Palestine conflict and — a vital prelude to this attempt at future healing — of the ways in which theology has become a bar to justice for the Palestinians. The speakers are a remarkable pair: Naim Ateek, the Palestinian canon of St. George's Anglican Cathedral in East Jerusalem, and Marc Ellis, a young American Jewish theologian who teaches at Roman Catholic Maryknoll School of Theology in New York state. The moderator is Robert Brashear, a Presbyterian minister active in Middle East affairs in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

I'm somewhat wary as the seminar begins. I've read Marc Ellis' new book — *Beyond Innocence and Redemption: confronting the Holocaust and Israeli power* — and found his message profoundly uplifting and revolutionary, but I'm still concerned that the seminar's theological character will make it too spiritual for my worldly political tastes. The list of participants seems to assure this. Out of approximately 30, half are clerics from various denominations; most of the remainder are laymen active in their churches.

As it happens, I need not have worried. The group is very much attuned to the Palestinian situation and very political. Most have travelled with church groups to the West Bank and Gaza; many have

attempted to discuss the Palestinian situation with Jewish groups. In fact, everything about the week — the location among spectacularly beautiful hills, the isolation (with no television and no major newspapers, the world rarely intrudes), camaraderie within the group, and the intellectual challenge of studying under and watching the interplay between a Palestinian of deep sensitivity and a Jew of exceptional vision — combines to make it an experience far more intense than I had anticipated. When I return home, I have the sensation of having been away for weeks.

Marc Ellis delivers his message with the utter confidence, indeed some of the brashness, of one who has written and spoken widely about it, and often been challenged on it. He has been all but excommunicated from the mainstream Zionist community, for he stands in opposition to the likes of Elie Wiesel and David Hartman. But he takes courage and inspiration from the knowledge that he is carrying on in the tradition of Hannah Arendt and Martin Buber.

His message is that Jewish empowerment in the state of Israel has moved Jews beyond the innocence they gained through suffering — an innocence defined since the 1960s by a group of what he calls Holocaust theologians, such as Wiesel — to the position of oppressors of Palestinians, and that Jews will betray their ancient tradition unless they can reclaim morality through solidarity with Palestinians and other suffering peoples.

Defining the task of theology as nurturing "the questions people need to ask about the history they are creating," Ellis believes theology distorts when it no longer asks the right questions. Holocaust theology no longer asks questions, he believes, because it cannot do so without confronting the realities of Israeli power and its dominance over Palestinians.

Naim Ateek speaks along the lines of his 1989 book,

Justice: a Palestinian theology of liberation. The major issue for all Palestinians, he tells the group, involves justice to Jews, a grave injustice was done to Palestinians. For Palestinian Christians, there is a further issue, what Ateek calls the political abuse of the Bible: the fact that the Bible has been used by Jews and many Western Christians as a Zionist text to justify and perpetuate the injustice. Because the Bible has been used to emphasise such themes as Jewish "chosen-ness" and to portray God as partial to Jews and concerned only for Jewish possession of Palestine, it has become irrelevant to — indeed an affront to — the Palestinians' experience of dispossession and occupation. Ateek instead invokes a merciful and just God and highlights scriptural texts that show God to be concerned for justice for all peoples, whose love is inclusive rather than exclusive.

In practical terms, Ateek applies his theology of liberation — which requires that Palestinians must not, any more than Jews, become oppressors once they have obtained justice — by advocating that Jews and Palestinians share the land of Palestine. The land belongs neither people, and the attempt to appropriate it to one people's exclusive use is a perversion of justice and of God's design.

We conclude on a hopeful note, but in reality our optimism is possible only because in this beautiful, isolated setting Ellis' call for Jewish solidarity with Palestinians and Ateek's call for a justice for Palestinians that would not do injustice to Jews seem to us, the already converted, to be so classically simple, so possible. It is indeed only through men of Ellis' and Ateek's vision that any such justice can ever be achieved, and so perhaps we can say we have seen the future up here in the hills of New Mexico. But it is a distant future, for nothing out in the world is quite this beautiful, or simple.

Syria restates terms ahead of Baker visit

DAMASCUS (R) — Syria reiterated its demands for peace in the Middle East Sunday ahead of a visit to Damascus by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker to discuss the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The official newspaper Tishreen said any efforts that were not based on United Nations resolutions calling for Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands and recognition of Palestinian rights were doomed to failure.

Mr. Baker, on his third Middle East peace mission in six weeks, is due in the Syrian capital Monday after visiting Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

In five and a half hours of talks with Israeli leaders on Friday, Mr. Baker made little headway in bridging Arab-Israeli differences over a proposed regional peace conference as a vehicle to launch

direct peace talks with the Jewish state.

"If success is desired for the current efforts this should start with an Israeli acceptance — through pressure or any other means — of U.N. resolutions on the Palestinian problem, an unconditional withdrawal from occupied Arab territories, a halt to settlement building..." Tishreen said.

The newspaper blamed Israel for blocking peace efforts through its rejection of U.N. resolutions and said Arabs would not accept Israel's conditions for peace at any cost.

"Arabs who would not accept the Israeli status quo at any cost are basing their response to peace efforts on a fact that peace could not exist with occupation," the paper said.

Jordan Muslim fundamentalists losing popularity

By Rana Sabbagh
Reuter

AMMAN — Jordan's Muslim Fundamentalists appear to be losing popularity after joining the government three months ago.

They have been hurt by not delivering on pledges to ease economic problems and launch jihad to help Iraq.

A resident of a Palestinian refugee camp in Amman said that in the three weeks since the Gulf war ended sympathy for the Muslim Brotherhood had declined rapidly — a trend which officials and politicians confirm but the organisation itself disputes.

"They had almost 100 per cent support, now it is no more than 65 per cent because they did not do much of what they promised us," the Palestinian said.

"Their popularity is going downhill," said Jalal Mohamed, a translator at a relief agency and a devout Muslim. "Which of their promises in parliament or in the government they have delivered? They are losing credibility."

The Brotherhood's candidate lost badly to a secular nationalist in Jordan's bar association elections last week — unlike other elections in the past two years in which it won

sweeping victories against left and liberal opponents.

Social and religious conservatism has long been the rule in Jordan but the Kingdom has also projected an air of relative tolerance, liberalism and openness to the outside world.

The Brotherhood came to political favour over the past two years against a background of deepening economic problems in Jordan, worsened by the Gulf crisis.

A leading political analyst said the party might be able to weather declining popularity, saying: "They remain the best organised and the biggest political group in Jordan. A comeback cannot be ruled out."

A spokesman for the Brotherhood group in parliament — the biggest single bloc — said there was no proof their popularity had eroded and it was unfair to judge their role in government in such a short period.

"We cannot rule out that the popularity of a political group can go up or down. But when we speak of the popularity of the Muslim Brotherhood in Jordan, we speak with complete confidence," he said.

"People emerged thwarted from the Gulf war, this was reflected in a decline of interest in politics."

The Brotherhood's next test will be when Jordan takes fresh

steps toward democracy by opening its political system to other parties under a national charter drafted under royal decree.

The government banned all parties in 1957 but allowed the Brotherhood, banned or restricted in many other Arab countries, to operate to balance the effect of leftists.

It has not lifted the ban but allowed known leftist party members to run in the November 1989 parliamentary elections, the first in two decades.

The Brotherhood made huge gains in those elections on promises that Islam held the answers to Jordan's economic, social and political ills. A year later, Abdul Latif Arabiyat was elected the first Brotherhood House speaker.

Five Brotherhood members later joined the government, the first to become ministers since Jordan was created in 1921. They took the portfolios of Islamic affairs, education, social development, agriculture and health.

Former sympathisers said what probably harmed the group most was its assertion that divine providence would ensure Iraq would win the Gulf war — in which U.S.-led western and Arab forces defeated the Iraqi army and drove it from Kuwait.

"They promised their followers Iraq would win the war, they called on them to launch jihad to help Baghdad fight a crusade by infidels against Muslims and to liberate Palestine," said a Jordanian politician. "But none of that came true."

Their spokesman rejected this criticism, saying talk of victory against the allies should not have been taken literally.

"An Islamic understanding of victory is not decided by the results of one battle but by the end result. It is enough that this war has unmasked the face of America... and proved that it is enemy number one of the world's nations."

The Brotherhood, which insists on the return of all Palestine to the Palestinians, joined a government whose policy on the Arab-Israeli conflict has been based on United Nations resolutions demanding an exchange of land for peace.

Some government sources said entering the cabinet, a controversial move within the Brotherhood, was hypocritical when they opposed the resolutions.

The Brotherhood spokesman said his group would maintain a tough stand on Middle East peace.

"We believe the Brotherhood will not stay a day longer

if the government implemented its policy and recognised the Jewish entity's right to exist on the land of Palestine," he said.

The Brotherhood's opponents criticise it for focusing on moral issues instead of economic problems.

Brotherhood deputies want Jordan to follow Islamic Sharia law, to ban interest, which they regard as usury, and to tighten moral standards. But they say they will rely on persuasion, not force.

They have won a ban on alcohol on Royal Jordanian flights to several Arab and Muslim capitals and forced the state-controlled media to ensure they respect Islamic perceptions of morality.

Parliament passed a law preventing women inheriting the same amount of land as their brothers, sweeping away property rights in place since the Ottoman empire.

Now, Brotherhood members are working on a law to ban alcohol in Jordan though few officials believe they will succeed.

Their scattered liberal opponents in Parliament joined together last week and banned them from passing laws that would have forced all banks to stop using interest.

Still early to return to emirate: Fate of Kuwait expatriates unclear

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and various international agencies and organisations remain in close touch over efforts to ensure the eventual return to Kuwait of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates who left the emirate during the Gulf crisis, but possess valid documents for residence there. However, the situation in Kuwait remains unclear and reports of vindictive mistreatment of the expatriates remaining in the emirate have further clouded the picture, they say.

The Jordanian government has been in touch with the concerned international organisations over the fate of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates, said a senior official. "The situation in Kuwait is under close study, but there is no immediate possibility of ensuring that the expatriates are allowed to return," he said.

An international relief agency official noted that the Kuwaiti authorities were not allowing the immediate return of any big number of Kuwaiti citizens who had fled and sought shelter in Arab and European countries. Against this backdrop, "it is wishful thinking that expatriates — except those whose services are most essentially needed — would be allowed to return immediately," the official said.

The official noted that basic services such as water and power supply and proper distribution of food have not yet been organised in Kuwait. "It would take several months before living conditions could be called bearable there," he added.

No precise number is available on Jordanians and Jordanian document-holders who have left Kuwait and are now in the Kingdom. Estimates range from 170,000 to 400,000. Many of them have lived in Kuwait for decades

and have their savings frozen in Kuwaiti banks.

There are three categories of Jordanian and Palestinian expatriates: Those who hold regular five-year Jordanian passports i.e. Jordanian citizens, some of whom are of West Bank and Gaza origin; West Bankers who Gazans who hold two-year Jordanian passports, which only serve as documents to facilitate their travel outside the Israeli-occupied territories; Gazans who hold Egyptian laissez passer and find it difficult to return to the occupied strip through Egypt and are denied entry across the River Jordan by the occupation authorities.

At least two international agencies have contacted the Kuwaiti authorities over the issue of return of expatriates. But none of them has received any response, sources said.

"At this point it is understandable that the Kuwaiti authorities are unable to set any timeframe for the return of expatriates," noted a senior international agency official. "But there cannot be any mistaking the fact that the issue has turned political," he said referring to reports of mistreatment of Jordanians and Palestinians by Kuwaiti elements for what is perceived as their support for Iraq and collaboration with the Iraqis during the seven-month occupation of the emirate.

While most activities of the international agencies in Amman were so far devoted to handling the problems of people leaving Iraq and Kuwait, said the official, "the focus is now shifting to political undercurrents and this is an area where international agencies can accomplish very little except through gentle persuasion."

"It will mostly depend on the parties directly involved and how the situation develops," the official asserted.

"International laws and norms made into the background and international agencies could do very little when dealing with issues of political relations between two sovereign states," he noted.

Ironically, some governments have contacted the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) with requests to arrange the transportation back to Kuwait of their nationals who left the emirate after the Iraqi invasion in August. "It is a totally different kind of situation," noted Alfred Kottek, chief of the IOM mission in Amman. "It was an emergency when hundreds of thousands of people left Kuwait in the middle of the crisis and international agencies had to step in with help," he noted. "Now, their return has to be arranged by their respective employers in line with the concerned laws and regulations. If the IOM could help in any way we are willing to do so."

The IOM, an inter-governmental agency which has mainly been concentrating on movement of people from Eastern Europe to the West and the flow of "boat people" from Vietnam as well as migration from areas of conflict, has handled the return home through Jordan of over 160,000 evacuees from Iraq and Kuwait since August.

The Kuwait government has been sending conflicting signals over its intentions over the expatriate community which numbered about 1.2 million before the Iraqi invasion. While some officials have said that everyone who possessed a valid document to stay in Kuwait would be allowed to return and resume work, others have said that the emirate has adopted a very selective approach to the issue and might give preference to nationals of those countries which are members of the anti-Iraq coalition.

Iraqi

(Continued from page 1)

tion to collect arms, however, was not only a factor that prevented or delayed mass protests in Baghdad — which is the main centre for Iraqi intellectuals and veteran politicians.

Many Iraqis interviewed seemed to be taken aback by the violent rebellion in the south and the north. If they were thinking of a revolution, at least the intellectuals, they could not identify with predominantly Shiite dissidents in the south and the Kurdish rebels in the north.

"The violence in the south and the north provided (President) Saddam with the opportunity to elicit his people's support against sectarian dissent and foreign intervention while it gave the Iraqis in Baghdad a chance to seriously reflect on the future instead of acting upon impulse," said the university professor interviewed by the Jordan Times.

In the words of a Baathist activist, the fear of Shiite sectarian violence had temporarily brought the Sunnis and the Baathists together — therefore the regime and the president appeared to be the only safety valve for the immediate future.

But officials in the government concede that the outcome of the war has widened the Gulf between the leadership and the people and that it would be extremely difficult to restore the leadership's credibility.

The leadership has so far benefitted from the fact the opposition, which is based abroad, does not have the needed credibility to lead the Iraqis due to its foreign links, Iranian connections and lack of organisational grassroots structure in the country.

"We know that the people would prefer a nationalist government to one with foreign links but we cannot take this for granted if frustration and anger reached the point of explosion. For if people are driven to despair they will follow any leader who might deliver and save them from their difficult living conditions," commented a well placed Baathist party member.

Officials are also aware that the war pushed to the surface all of the shortcomings of the regime and its record of repression. "It is (President Saddam's) fault. He did not give a breathing space and instead he has alienated many decent and qualified intellectuals," said an Iraqi artist.

But the most striking aspect of criticism of President Saddam is that many — including those who loved and loathed him alike before the war — say that their bitterness was mostly brought about by the defeat and that he could have sustained and increased his support among them if he had won.

Iraqi opponents of their president argue that the most catastrophic outcome of the war was that the U.S. had achieved its goal of destroying and weakening Iraq.

"Saddam had made us feel proud of being Iraqis after the Iraqi-Iranian war and when he emerged as the most influential leader in the Arab World," said a physician. "Why he

allowed the U.S. and others to lure us into the Kuwaiti trap and humiliate us like that, I do not really know," the physician added.

Although many Iraqis in Baghdad, who were interviewed before the war had said that they did not support the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait, many were arguing now that President Saddam should have either withdrawn long before the Jan. 15 deadline or continued the fight until the end.

What torments many in Baghdad is that the leadership, including President Saddam, has not said a word to explain the decision to withdraw, giving rise to speculation and rumours about treachery among the president's aides and other similar stories.

A soldier interviewed after he came back to Baghdad from Kuwait said the troops' morale was completely shaken once soldiers heard that the president had accepted the Soviet peace initiative which involved an Iraqi withdrawal.

"I and others felt that that if he was withdrawing anyhow why should we die here," the young soldier said. "But it would have been even better if he had ordered an immediate pullout then and not after the beginning of the ground assault... we were already confused," the soldier added.

Iraqi officials said that the leadership believed it could withdraw the troops and equipment safely into Iraqi territories. They subsequently felt tricked by the allied forces which attacked the withdrawing troops both in Kuwait and inside Iraqi territory. The officials' contentions implied that there were some sort of promises not to attack the withdrawing troops, but these could not be substantiated. They also accused Iran of stabbing Iraq in the back by sending armed infiltrators into Iraq's south to

instigate a rebellion seizing the opportunity of the allied forces' incursion into Iraqi territory.

But, as long as the riddle of the withdrawal remains unsolved, many Iraqis feel let down by the leadership and promises for democratisation — unless accompanied by swift practical measures — would not be enough to heal the wounds of the injured pride of a historically struggling nation.

Prince

(Continued from page 1)

the Jordanian side by His Majesty King Hussein's Political Adviser Adnan Abu Odeh and the Jordanian ambassador to Canada.

The Crown Prince also met with several members of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Canadian parliament.

Jordan aid

(Continued from page 1)

going to succeed in fending it off (the aid-cessation movement) unless we have a pretty clear-cut statement" from the administration explaining why it is essential to continue that aid.

Mr. Kelly assured the chairman that his office could provide such a letter. One congressman said he wanted to see such a letter published in his hometown newspaper in order to assuage constituents when he votes to let the aid continue.

The administration believes that Jordan is critical in that region, Mr. Kelly said. "It's critical politically, it's critical geographically, it's critical sociologically. It's critical because of the water problem," Mr. Kelly said. "Any look at the map," he explained, "demonstrates why any comprehensive settlement in the Middle East has got to address and involve Jordan. Jordan

is critical because of the influence that King Hussein and the government have over Palestinians, broadly, and there may be a role for Jordan — may be a role — we're not sure at this juncture," Mr. Kelly called U.S. military and economic assistance to the Middle East "significant tools" in U.S. efforts to "bring stability to the region," and he said such policy was validated during the Gulf war.

Asked if the United States was "retaliating" against other countries, such as Yemen, which had not supported the coalition in the Gulf crisis by cutting assistance, Mr. Kelly said the United States was simply reflecting where U.S. priorities lie now.

According to Mr. Kelly, there will be no U.S. security assistance for 1992 in the budget for Yemen, and the United States plans to reduce developmental assistance to that country.

Mr. Kelly said the United States hopes that Yemen will "reexamine its positions and move in a direction that would allow development of a more cooperative relationship."

attack

(Continued from page 1)

been banned from entering central Israel for eight weeks after the Jan. 17 start of the Gulf war. The move was intended to prevent violence by pro-Iraqi Palestinians.

Last Sunday, police began to allow Palestinian workers with special permits to return to Tel Aviv and Haifa.

Israeli troops on patrol near the ceasefire line in the occupied West Bank shot and killed two infiltrators during a pre-dawn fire fight Friday, the military command said.

It said the clash occurred at about 3 a.m. (0100 GMT) in the northern part of the Jordan Valley, near a Jewish settlement.

Palestinians

(Continued from page 1)

gunmen. Officials and diplomats in Kuwait say government is taking action to curb excesses against Palestinians by troops and militiamen hunting suspected collaborators.

The United States has told Kuwait it must observe internationally accepted standards of human rights and should build a more open society.

Assistant Secretary of State John Kelly said Wednesday Washington had told Kuwaiti authorities not to take reprisals against those it believed collaborated with Iraq during its seven-month occupation of the emirate.

In Amman, a PLO official warned this week of revenge if the killing of Palestinians in Kuwait continued and urged the world to protect them.

"We urge the international humanitarian organisations and all countries concerned with finding a just peace to stop these slaughters in Kuwait," Mohammad Milhem, a member of the PLO executive, told Reuters.

"Their continuation will definitely lead to revenge and retaliation and start a vicious circle," he said.

Iraqi jet

(Continued from page 1)

members of the Iraqi opposition move to northern Iraq to study the new development and discuss the possibility of forming a provisional government," he said in a statement released by his London office.

A spokesman for the Islamic Daw'a Party told Reuters in Damascus that the Republican Guards were stopping people from outside entering Baghdad.

The (state of) siege came after the regime got information about a possible military coup whose organisers were not known," he claimed. "Units of the Republican Guard which protect Saddam have been placed around Baghdad and only vehicles of the Republican Guards are being allowed to enter the city."

Baghdad Radio broadcast normal programmes Friday.

Hoshyar Zebari, a spokesman for the KDP, said any provisional government would include members of the various opposition factions. He said Mr. Barzani issued his invitation to all the leaders of the joint action committee, a coalition of Iraqi opposition factions formed last December.

In heavy fighting near Mosul, Kurdish guerrillas said they overran an Iraqi military base, killing

dozens of defenders, taking 500 Iraqi soldiers prisoners and capturing a dozen tanks, armoured personnel carriers and all the military equipment on the base.

Sanctions

(Continued from page 1)

sion. In another development at the United Nations, the United States has proposed that Iraq agree to destroy its nuclear weapons-grade materials and ballistic missiles, as well as chemical and biological weapons.

U.S. officials stressed that Security Council members were still negotiating the fine points of the proposed resolution, which effectively would set the requirements for Iraq to gain a permanent ceasefire.

Mr. Ahtisaari warned that Iraq faced an "imminent catastrophe" of epidemics and famine if food, fuel and other equipment was not sent immediately.

The report by Mr. Ahtisaari of Finland, who had just completed a mission to Iraq, called on the international community help Iraq in restoring agriculture, water, sanitation and health needs.

"It is unmistakable that the Iraqi people may soon face a further imminent catastrophe, which could include epidemic and

Kuwaitis

(Continued from page 1)

Ang 2, met the first batch at the airport. Some of the Kuwaitis returned home only to be incarcerated again by the military.

Only 150 Kuwaiti citizens arrived in Kuwait by late afternoon to the happy cries of their wives and kisses of their children. They were allowed to return home to their families.

The rest, an estimated 300 men, were taken to a military camp outside Kuwait City because, although they served in Kuwait's security forces, they were not Kuwaiti citizens, according to Yusuf Al Khawari, an official at Kuwait's ministry of justice.

Mr. Khawari, who is involved in POWs effort, said the men would undergo further identity checks and then be given to their army, police or national guard units.

But other Kuwaiti officials, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said they believed the men would be held and then deported in line with a government desire to decrease the number of foreigners in the country.

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Sports

Liverpool edges closer to Arsenal and Europe

LONDON (R) — Liverpool manager Graeme Souness saw his new side edge closer to English League leaders Arsenal — and to a place in Europe next season — when they beat Norwich 3-0 in their first match in charge Saturday.

The win, with goals from John Barnes, Ray Houghton and Ian Rush, leaves the second-placed champions just three points adrift of Arsenal with four games to play.

Arsenal, also with four matches left, were not in action because their scheduled opponents Manchester United were playing in Sunday's League Cup final against Sheffield Wednesday.

Liverpool had to vie for attention on an action-packed afternoon. F.A. Cup finalists Nottingham Forest stole the champions' thunder with a 7-0 thrashing of a hapless Chelsea.

At Manchester City, Ireland striker Niall Quinn personally consigned Derby County to the second division.

Quinn scored the first of two City goals in the 22nd minute, then went into goal 10 minutes later to save a penalty after the sending-off of City goalkeeper Tony Coton.

Derby got a consolation goal in the 89th minute but went down 2-1.

In the second division, West Ham made up for last week's F.A. Cup semifinal defeat with a 2-0 win over Swindon that guaranteed their promotion.

Liverpool, "turning on the screws" as Souness had asked

after his arrival from Glasgow Rangers earlier in the week, made all the early running with 'keeper Bruce Grobbelaar, back in the side after a six-match injury layoff, barely needed.

Their first goal came through a 31st-minute free kick by Steve Staunton, converted by Barnes with a diving header.

Liverpool added a second goal five minutes later when Rush and Staunton created the opening for Houghton to side-foot the ball into the net.

With chants of "Europe, Europe, here we come" filling Anfield, Welsh striker Ian Rush scored his 24th goal of the season five minutes from time to put Liverpool 3-0 ahead.

At Nottingham Forest's city ground, where there was a carnival atmosphere induced by last Sunday's F.A. Cup semifinal win, the game was even more one-sided as five Forest players put their names on the scoresheet.

Irish discovery Roy Keane opened up the scoring in the ninth minute, blasting home a cross from Gary Crosby. Four minutes later captain Stuart Pearce ended a rampaging run down the wing with a cross that left Garry Parker with a simple tap-in at the far post.

In the 26th minute Ian Woan grabbed his first senior goal after another Crosby cross and then four minutes into the second half manager's son Nigel Clough turned in a near-post cross from Pearce.

Parker added a fifth in the 62nd minute, leaving Pearce to score his first in the 78th minute and Keane to grab a second six minutes from the final whistle.

If Quinn was the hero of the day at Manchester City, there was no question who was the villain. After being shown a red card for a professional foul on Derby striker Dean Saunders, Coton guaranteed himself a hefty fine by throwing his gloves in the referee's face before storming off the pitch.

It was a sad day for Derby, who have not won in 19 matches despite a desperate bid to avoid relegation.

In other first division games, second-from-bottom Sunderland scored a 2-1 win in their relegation battle with Luton, who are now just two points above them.

F.A. Cup finalists Tottenham squandered a 2-0 lead away to Sheffield United. Sheffield squared the score with two goals in the last 12 minutes of the match.

West Ham's 2-0 win over Swindon means they become the first of four teams to win promotion from the second division. The London side are now 17 points clear of fifth-placed Notts County, who have only five matches left to play.

In Scotland, Premier League leaders Glasgow Rangers got over the shock of losing manager Souness with a 1-0 win away to St. Mirren. Rangers are two points ahead of Aberdeen, who won 3-0 at home to Motherwell.

Mota and Tolstikov win in London Marathon

LONDON (R) — Rosa Mota and Yakov Tolstikov both broke away at the halfway stage to win the women's and men's sections of the 11th London Marathon and World Cup Sunday.

Portuguese Mota, the Olympic, world and European champion, made no contest of the women's race, finishing in an unofficial two hours 26 minutes 14 seconds.

Soviet Tolstikov, who has never won a major Marathon before, was an equally convincing winner of the men's race in an unofficial personal best of 2:09:17, the third fastest time ever in the London race.

Olympic champion Gelindo Bordin, the pre-race favorite, was in trouble after 21 kms of the 42.195-km race and dropped back steadily in the field.

The race started in chilly conditions and a head wind over the closing stages made conditions difficult for the field of 24,000.

"It was very hard because it was so windy," Mota said. "It (the wind) was very strong and I ran only to win the race."

"I feel good. I tried to run the second part of the race faster than the first."

Bordin, whose training was interrupted by a cold two weeks ago, dropped out of the race after 35 kilometers.

American veteran Francie Larrieu Smith was second in 2:27:35 and Soviet Valentina Yegorova, second to Mota in last year's European Championships, was third in 2:28:18.

Portuguese Manuel Matias edged Pole Jan Huruk to finish second in the men's race. Both men clocked 2:10:21.

Mota was quickly into the lead in the women's race which began 30 minutes before the men got underway.

She pushed the pace in the early stages, followed closely by Yegorova and German Karin Dorre.

After the field had crossed Tower Bridge near the halfway stage, Mota poured on the pace, steadily increasing the gap.

Larrieu Smith, 38, who competed over 1,500 metres at the 1972 Munich Olympics, set out in pursuit but the Portuguese, who will not run a marathon again until August's World Championships in Tokyo, was not to be caught.

Tolstikov, a physical education teacher in Siberia, accelerated suddenly at the halfway stage and kept up the pace over the second half to finish a comfortable winner.

His previous best international performance was a third place in the 1986 Moscow Goodwill Games.



Monica Seles

Seles, Fernandez reach final of Houston Slims

HOUSTON, Texas (R) — World number one Monica Seles and second-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez cruised to semifinal victories Saturday and will battle for title in the final of the \$350,000 Virginia Slims of Houston.

The top-seeded Seles of Yugoslavia, looking for her third singles title of the year, used her punishing two-fisted ground-stroking game to take the first 10 games enroute to a 6-0 6-2 victory in 71 minutes over sixth-seeded Sandra Cecchini of Italy in one semifinal match.

Earlier, fifth-ranked Fernandez made unseeded Linda Harvey-Wild's first semifinal appearance an unsuccessful one, downing the fellow American 6-0 6-3 in the other clay court contest.

"I think I'm playing fine, not great," said Seles, 17, who despite being bothered by shin splints lately, lost just five games in racing through three opponents this week.

Seles holds a 4-1 career mark against Fernandez, which includes four consecutive wins with a pair of semifinal victories coming this year at the Australian Open and the Lipton International Player's Championship.

"We know each other's game so well," Seles said. "She's a great groundstroke and there are going to be a lot of long rallies. I'm going to have to play a great match tomorrow. But that's what a final is, two of the best."

Cecchini, ranked 23rd, shook her head over her lopsided loss. "I played well but I missed too

much," said Cecchini, who committed 32 unforced errors to Seles' 19 as she remained winless in two career tries against her.

Fernandez, who also teamed with Patty Fendick to gain the final of the doubles, assessed her semifinal victory.

"I played aggressively and returned serve well in the opening set," she said.

"When I was down 3-1, I started to play more aggressively and put more pressure on her. After all, she had nothing to lose," she added.

Fernandez, 19, used a solid baseline attack to breeze through Harvey-Wild, who was making her first semifinal appearance in a major tournament.

Harvey-Wild, 20, ranked 93rd, built a 3-1 advantage in the second set before Fernandez regrouped to run off the final five games to complete the 63-minute straight set victory.

"She's tough mentally and she doesn't give you anything," Harvey-Wild said of her first meeting with Fernandez.

"She's solid. I don't think she missed a return today, and she played the crucial points well."

Fernandez, who has won two career titles but advanced to her first final of the year, said she is looking forward to Sunday's clash with Seles worth \$70,000 to the winner and \$31,500 to the runner-up.

"I've lost the last two times to Seles, and obviously I would like to beat her," said Fernandez. But I'm just happy to be in the final."

Auxerre beats Metz to secure place in Europe

PARIS (R) — Auxerre almost certainly secured a place in Europe next season when they came back from a goal down to beat Metz 3-1 in the French first division.

Defender Cyril Serresdum gave visitors Metz a surprise lead in the 11th minute but Daniel Dutel and Hungarian striker Kalman Kovacs put Auxerre ahead by halftime.

Begin midfielder Enzo Scifo wrapped up the game six minutes into the second half.

Auxerre stayed third with 43 points, five behind leaders Marseille and, more importantly, eight points ahead of fifth-placed team Montpellier with four games to play.

A top four place guarantees a

birth in the UEFA Cup next season.

Cannes stayed fourth despite a 3-2 defeat in Brest when an error by experienced midfielder Luis Fernandez in the last minute let in Goran Milojovic to score his second goal of the game.

Marseille drew 1-1 away to struggling Rennes Friday night, allowing rivals Monaco to close the gap to two points after a 2-0 win in Sochaux. The leaders still have a game in hand.

There was more good news for Bordeaux, who were saved from liquidation Friday, when they fought their way to a 2-0 win in Toulon to move out of the relegation-threatened zone. Their scorers were Amor Gudjohnsen and Didier Deschamps.

Milan thwarted again by Roma

ROME (R) — For the second time this season, as Roma proved a major stumbling block in the path of AC Milan when they drew 1-1 with the fallen European champions in the Italian soccer "C" division.

Both goals in Milan's San Siro Stadium came in a hectic flurry in the final four minutes of a game dominated by Milan, who trail leaders Sampdoria by two points.

In Sardinia, struggling Cagliari held Juventus to a goalless draw in Saturday's other Italian League match.

The two games were brought forward because of next Wednesday's European semifinal second-leg commitments when Juventus try to overcome a 3-1 deficit against Barcelona in the Cup Winners' Cup and Roma entertain Brondy in the UEFA Cup after a goalless first leg in Denmark.

Roma, who knocked Milan out of the Italian Cup earlier this month, looked like snatching both points when striker Ruggiero Rizzitelli scored on an opportunist solo counter-attack

in the 87th minute, brilliantly beating a defender and rounding goalkeeper Sebastiano Rossi.

Milan had to wait till injury time for their deserved equalizer when substitute striker Massimo Agostini headed home from close range.

Earlier, Dutchmen Marco Van Basten and Ruud Gullit and defender Paolo Maldini had all been denied by the brilliance of Roma goalkeeper Giovanni Cervone.

Juventus, fourth in the table, missed a number of first half chances in Cagliari.

Barcelona win 3-0 against Seville

MADRID (R) — Spanish Soccer League leaders Barcelona beat Seville 3-0 after Seville goalkeeper Monchi Rodriguez was sent off in the first half for felling striker Aitor Beguiristain.

Reserve keeper Rodriguez, replacement for injured first choice Juan Unzué, receiving his marching orders in the 36th minute with his team 1-0 down when he charged out of his area and downed Beguiristain with a rugby tackle.

With the club's third-choice goalkeeper unavailable through injury, Seville took off midfielder Roman Vazquez and fielded 19-year-old Jaime Ferrer, the youth team keeper, as substitute.

Striker Juan Goikoetxea had

put Barcelona ahead after just two minutes when he took a long pass from Danish international Michael Laudrup and sped through Seville's defence to score.

Chile's Ivan Zamorano hit a post for Seville 14 minutes later but the dismissal of goalkeeper Rodriguez undermined the morale of the Andalusian team.

Barcelona bombarded the Seville defence in the second half. Bulgarian striker Khristo Stoitkov bounced a shot off the post before Guillermo Amor headed in the second goal in the 52nd minute.

Amor missed a second chance and Julio Salinas passed up two

more before Miguel Soler made it 3-0 after 57 minutes.

Barcelona then relaxed to save energy for next Wednesday's Cup Winner's semifinal second leg against Juventus in Italy where they defend a 3-1 first-leg advantage.

Real Madrid, long out of the hunt in their ill-starred title defence, won 3-1 at lowly Real Betis to boost their hopes of a place in next season's UEFA's Cup.

Emilio Butragueno netted the first goal after just four minutes and created an opening 16 minutes into the second half for defender Fernandez Hierro to score the second.

GOREN BRIDGE

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ANSWERS TO WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠AK105 ♠7 ♠8 ♠K1095
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Dbl 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?
A.—Your kings are badly placed. Still, partner did raise to two spades. (Come are the days when partner bid two spades over the double to say he was too weak to pass one spade?) You can expect some 7-9 points and, since all must be working, we would venture four spades. West is not going to enjoy defending this hand.

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠853 ♠763 ♠76 ♠KJ93
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
3 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What action do you take?
A.—This is not the sort of hand where a 4-3 major fit is a desirable contract—more than half your strength is opposite a marked singleton in partner's hand. Since clubs are firmly under control and partner might produce a source of tricks, we would opt for three no trump. For the conservatives, we also would accept a pass before the doubling starts.

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠Q98 ♠KQ106 ♠863 ♠5
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?
A.—Don't let those 100 honors in hearts blind you from doing your duty. You have four-card support for partner's suit, and to suppress it

would justify the firing squad. Raise to three diamonds.

Q.4—East-West vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠Void A108432 ♠AJ92 ♠K76
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?
A.—Had North responded one spade, you should have considered your hand a minimum and rebid two hearts. Here, however, your club fit improves the hand considerably, so we would bid two diamonds now, intending to support clubs on the next round to describe the distributional features of our holding.

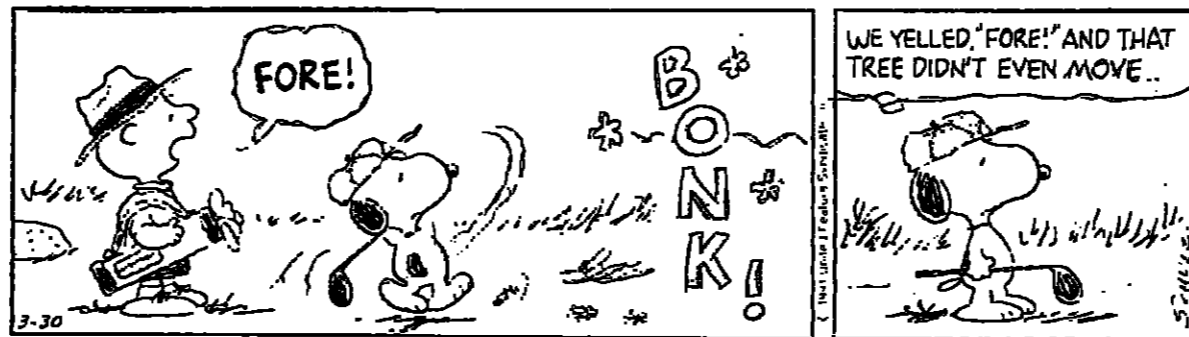
Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠AQ9 ♠Q6 ♠AK983 ♠Q54
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass 3 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?
A.—This is close, but with 17 high-card points and superb spade support, we'll opt for the aggressive action. Bid four diamonds—an advance cue-bid in support of spades. Back off, though, if partner makes a move toward slam.

Q.6—Neither vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠KQ7 ♠KQ873 ♠AKQ7 ♠5
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass

What do you bid now?
A.—No matter what your methods, this hand is too strong for anything other than a jump shift. Bid three diamonds. While it's true that you may have no fit and your forcing action may get you overboard, you gotta do what you gotta do.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR MONDAY APRIL 22, 1991

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Don't let an emotional tizzy get you down or be thrown by the critical awareness of another who is trying to move into your immediate space. Stand off to the side to best see this relationship.

realize you are a devoted family member who also has some good ideas for improvements.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Now you are able to find the exact meaning of your usual tasks by discussing them with any usual allies who have considerable power in your affairs.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are able to get more of this world's goods by concentrating your efforts in the material side of things instead of trying to understand the mysterious.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Whatever you have in mind that does require considerable personal effort to gain your intimate aims is fine so forget business and go after such.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Seek out the most devoted person you know and get him or her to give you the data that you need to get rid of some restricting conditions.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Your gregarious tendencies are touched off now and you can have a very happy time at social pleasures with those in your own group.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Get out in the world of business and civic projects now and show you are a solid citizen with many interesting ways to put public projects in effect.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You can get off to some new contacts and let them know what you have in mind for the future and just where they will fit into this arrangement.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Get busy early and pay those obligations facing you whether of a partnership or personal nature so you can clear the pathway for the future.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Take some time out to find the policies and principles under which you and your partner can best operate in the future and forget the details.

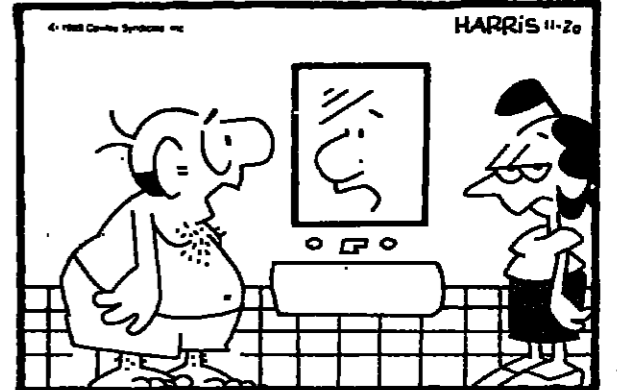
MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Think over where you may have made some mistakes in the work picture that requires your attention and eliminate any wrong conceptions.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Whatever you have in mind that does require that you hold steady to long-term satisfactory pleasures is just right for you so enjoy yourself.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You can do the things that will please your family and make them

THE BETTER HALF.

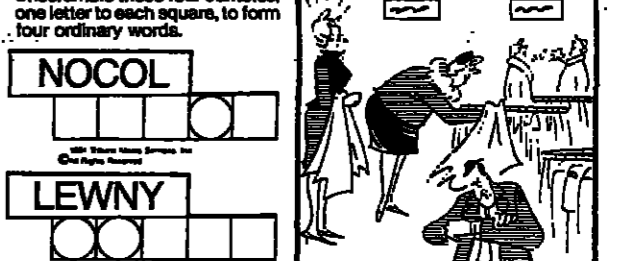
By Harris



"I shaved off my mustache and it's AMAZING — I look like a 16-year-old again!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



WHAT SOME PEOPLE SEEM TO TAKE WHEN THEY GO SHOPPING.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

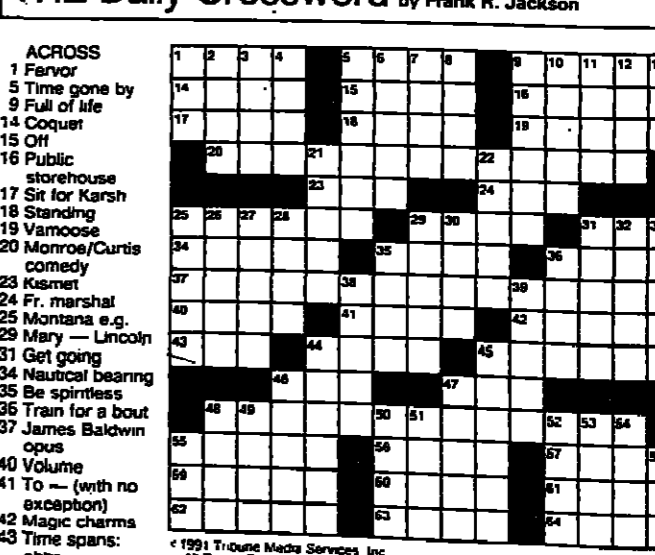
Print answer here: _____

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumble: ODDLY GUESS BOTTLE SUBDUED

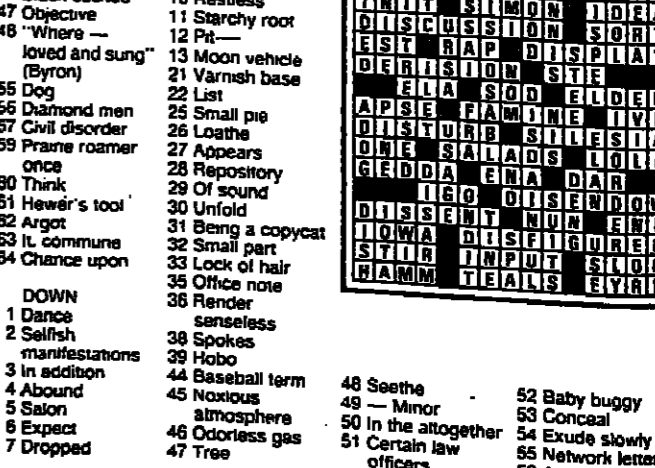
Answer: A funny story is always improved when... TOLD BY THE BOSS

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson



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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:



Manila seeks help from Asian neighbours and Saudi Arabia

MANILA (R) — The Philippines is trying to tap new sources of credit from Taiwan, South Korea and Saudi Arabia, but says agreement on fresh funding from overseas commercial banks remains crucial for its economic future.

Central bank governor Jose Cuisia said a global credit shortage was making it more difficult for the Philippines, which has overseas debts of \$29 billion, to obtain new financing from the commercial banks.

The huge capital requirements of eastern Europe, and Kuwait after the Gulf war, had created growing worldwide competition for credits, he said in an interview.

Manila was trying to arrange credits from non-traditional lenders, Cuisia said.

"We are looking at countries which have some interest in the Philippines but have not been lending, for example Taiwan and South Korea," he said.

Saudi Arabia was a possible source of financing because of its links with Manila through the 500,000 Filipino contract workers employed in the kingdom, he

said.

"Saudi Arabia is not a direct lender to the Philippines. But because we have quite a number of Filipinos in Saudi Arabia we are trying to also get them to provide some kind of financial assistance to the Philippines," he said.

"We recognise however that they also have fairly substantial requirements to finance the war that just ended. So we are trying to see what can be negotiated," he added.

He did not put a figure on the possible funding Manila was seeking from the three countries. Finance Secretary Jesus Eustanislao has said Manila could float up to \$3 billion worth of government bonds to interested countries.

The Philippines' financing gap was estimated at \$2.2 billion over 1991 and 1992, Cuisia said.

He expected this could largely be covered through a \$1.2 billion rescheduling of debt owed to official lenders grouped in the Paris Club, as well as loans from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank.

Cuisia and Eustanislao will meet

the Paris Club in early June.

Financing from commercial banks remained crucial for the country's economic future because it was required under an agreement approved in February by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a \$900 million loan package, Cuisia said.

"It's crucial because it's part of the IMF agreement that the banks must bear a proportionate share of the burden," he noted.

"In the review that the fund is going to undertake in August, we must be able to show substantial progress in getting financing assurances from the commercial banks. So it's crucial and the banks know it," the central bank governor said.

He said he would meet with several leading commercial banks in Washington at the end of April to discuss a possible \$250 million co-financing arrangement with the ADB.

If that failed less palatable options, including a re-timing of almost \$1 billion in interest payments to the banks for this year, would have to be considered, he said.

Pakistan sets tax share rates for provinces

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced Saturday a long-delayed new award giving provinces a population-based share in major taxes.

Sharif told a news conference his federal government would retain its current 20 per cent from a pool of five taxes — income and corporate tax, sales tax, export duty on cotton, and excise duty on tobacco and sugar.

Of the remaining 80 per cent, Punjab, the most populous province, would get the largest share of 57.88 per cent from the start of the new financial year on July 1.

Sindh, North West Frontier and Baluchistan provinces would get 23.28 per cent, 13.54 per cent and 5.30 per cent respectively under the award, recommended by a national finance commission set up last December.

Sharif said the award fixed special federal grants for provinces and they would be paid profits and royalties from hydroelectric power stations and natural gas fields in their areas. But Islamabad would no longer meet budgetary deficits and pick up surpluses of provinces, he said.

Until now there has been a provisional share-out of federally collected revenue and the federal government has covered provincial deficits.

The last award was given in 1975 under then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The second was due in 1980, but was never made after Bhutto was toppled in a 1977 coup followed by 11 years of military-led rule.

The absence of a tax distribution award has often caused bickering between the federal government in Islamabad and the provinces.

Batelco boosts '90 net profit

MANAMA, Bahrain (R) — The Bahrain Telecommunication Company (Batelco) reported Sunday a 1990 net profit of 21.34 million dinars (\$56.9 million), up 3.5 per cent over the previous year.

Batelco Chairman Ibrahim Mohammad Homeidi, who is Bahrain's transport minister, said the rise was due in part to an increase in international telephone calls during the Gulf crisis.

His 1989 net profit was 20.5 million dinars (\$55 million). A company statement said shareholders would receive a total of 15 million dinars (about \$40 million) in cash dividends. Batelco is owned 20 per cent by London-based Cable and Wireless PLC, 40 per cent by Bahrain's government and 40 per cent by local firms and individuals. Its shares are traded on the Bahrain Stock Exchange.

Former planning minister puts emphasis on software in Jordanian industries

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Intangibles in industrial production are equally, if not more important than the tangible fixed assets or finished products that a manufacturer produces, according to Dr. Taher Kanaan, former minister of planning.

Dr. Kanaan, currently general manager of the Industrial Development Bank (IDB), stressed that any industry "is not only a hardware of hangars, cranes, generators and forklifts but also a software of management, maintenance and industrial services which should be given due recognition."

"Services and intangibles are very valuable in industry," he pointed out, describing them as "investments activities that maximise the use of manpower and minimise the use of machines and raw materials."

To meet this important objective, the former planning minister told the Jordan Times, the opportunities are wide open now for Jordanian industries to benefit from the knowledge and expertise of Jordanians who returned home after the Gulf crisis.

"This is the best chance to really use our human capital," Dr. Kanaan said of the skilled manpower and engineers among others who left the Gulf Arab countries.

Before they consider employment opportunities in Europe, Australia or any other foreign country, Jordan should reverse the "brain drain" of past years and redirect it into the economic cycle of the Kingdom, Dr. Kanaan added, noting that the returnees who are at present seeking retraining of their skills and life savings in the home-country are attracted by the socially warm and politically stable environment in this country even if in-

comes are lower.

Speaking of his experiences about industry in general, the IDB head said that Jordan was a landlocked country with a small economy that is vulnerable to external developments. As such, it is a necessity that any industry be export-oriented to succeed.

Dr. Kanaan, however, noted that any industrial product should enjoy "a bread and butter basis in the local market" to be able to survive should an external factor hinder or block an export market, which was the case with Iraq.

In reply to a question about the possibility of the IDB setting up an "advisory section" to guide potential investors to profitable and needed industries Dr. Kanaan said that that was a national task which he termed "project identification."

He admitted that project identification efforts in Jordan were far from adequate, a shortcoming that should be addressed by the Ministry of Planning, the Amman Chamber of Industry, the IDB and other interested parties.

"Project identification carries a high cost and requires expertise at the highest level," Dr. Kanaan explained, because it is an investment of money without any assurance of a return or a profit in the short-term, if ever.

Moreover, it requires expert, technical knowledge in a large number of specific fields together with a comprehensive understanding of neighbouring and other foreign markets in order to undertake an exhaustive scanning of investment opportunities and an in-depth analysis of each opportunity to reach useful pre-investment profiles for all identified opportunities.

Looking at the Jordanian industry from another angle, Dr. Kanaan belittled the effectiveness of selling industrial goods under protocols or agreements between the Jordanian government and

other countries.

"The real test is selling in hard currency markets," he pointed out.

Under such a test, Dr. Kanaan elaborated, comes the subject of marketing in which Jordan needs to put up a higher level of effort.

Citing the Agricultural Marketing Corporation and the Jordanian Commercial Centres Corporation as examples, he said both were only partially successful because the first was a public entity that needed the vigour of the private sector while the second exercised a limited interpretation of its mandate until the time of its recent reorganisation.

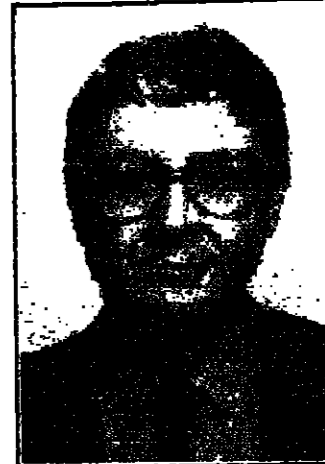
Dr. Kanaan said that marketing was an expensive process which no small or medium size industry could afford and, therefore, there was no alternative but to copy in some form or another a system similar to the "trading houses" of Japan such as C. Itoh, Misui and others of varying sizes.

The IDB general manager said that such Japanese companies buy a product from a Japanese manufacturer according to certain specifications, give the product the name of the company and then sell it abroad.

He described the Japanese trading houses as the best example of successful export method as they undertake the steps of identifying the needs of an export market, physically controlling the product and its value and the selling strategy.

If the private and public sectors in Jordan cooperate in setting up Japanese-style trading houses which can identify export markets and physically handle products down the line to the final consumer abroad, then, Dr. Kanaan said, Jordan would be really achieving a giant leap forward.

Asked for more details, he said that such a path eliminates first of all the competition of Jordanian exporters to penetrate or expand



Dr. Taher Kanaan

in any given outside market and, more importantly, cancel the risk of any damage to an export market by an exporter who might sell poor quality products.

The trading house, by its control of the product itself and not only acting as a commission agent, would be the best organisation to dictate on the manufacturer the quality and the appropriate price for a product to be successfully exported, Dr. Kanaan explained.

The manufacturer, as a result, would be forced to turn high quality goods and, at the same time, exercise his industrial management to reduce production costs without having to worry about the selling phase.

"Proper management and planning at all levels of production and wise maintenance policies will undoubtedly reduce industrial costs," Dr. Kanaan affirmed in reply to a question on complaints of high costs usually claimed by Jordanian industrialists.

Dr. Kanaan described the industrialists in Jordan as knowledgeable entrepreneurs who for the past 25 years had succeeded in setting up import-substitution projects which helped lay down an industrial base in the Kingdom.

However, he cautioned, Jordanian industrialists must continue to aim for a finished product philosophy and turn more into production of intermediate materials because, as it is now, "the margin of value added in Jordanian industries is rather thin."

'Gorbachev can't stop the wind'

Soviet miners step up strike pressure despite Moscow threat

DONETSK, Soviet Union (Agencies) — Coalminers in the Soviet Union's industrial heartland, unimpressed by a government threat to ban strikes, stepped up efforts to force President Mikhail Gorbachev to accept their demands.

In the Ukrainian city of Donetsk over the weekend, miners lobbied factory workers to join their seven-week-old strike and thus paralyse the Soviet economy.

They said their protest would continue even if the Soviet parliament Monday approves Gorbachev's request for a moratorium on strikes.

"This is a strict measure, and like many of Gorbachev's strict measures, it will amount to nothing," said Vladimir Popov, a miner at a rally in Donetsk. "Gorbachev can't stop the wind, and the wind is with us."

Thousands of Ukrainian factory workers who had never before considered defying the central government have joined the strike amid demands for Gorbachev's resignation and the dissolution of the Soviet parliament.

Ten thousand employees at a cotton mill walked off their jobs last week. About 17,500 workers at a shoe factory staged a two-

hour warning strike on Friday. And workers at a giant metallurgical factory were considering a stoppage.

Many too timid or too indoctrinated to contemplate strike action before said steep price rises this month as part of a gradual transition to a market economy were the final straw.

"We want all workers in the Soviet Union to go on strike," said 47-year-old Nina Modryk, as she left a Donetsk cable factory, where 100 employees went on strike on April 12.

"The government wants to suppress people, to shut us up," she said, to cheers and applause from fellow workers.

"Even if the (anti-strike) law is passed and the government uses force, we have nothing to lose. We have already wasted our lives in this country," she declared.

Every day, miners and factory workers gather in front of the Donetsk Communist Party headquarters, waving the Ukrainian nationalist flag and banners condemning the Soviet government.

One banner read: "If we don't manage to arouse people around us, we will drown in the mud Gorbachev and his team created."

On Saturday, the noise of the rally drowned out patriotic music blaring in the centre of town to celebrate an annual festival in honour of state founder Vladimir Lenin.

Some 300,000 Soviet miners are now on strike at pits from the Polish border to Siberia in a stoppage that is crippling the country's heavy industry. About 50,000 of the miners are from the Donetsk region, traditionally conservative.

Donetsk miners, who ended a previous strike in 1989 when the government made concessions on wages, say they will stay on strike this time until their political demands are met as well.

"Our dissatisfaction with the government has progressed in stages over the past two years," said Viktor Osovsky, a leader of the Donetsk strike committee.

"We realise now that receiving a few more roubles will not drastically improve our lives. The only solution is for the government to resign," he pointed out.

Some miners acknowledge that their political demands have forced them in a corner. If Gorbachev does not resign, they will be forced either to return to work or find other jobs.

Therefore they hope their strike will expand, creating a movement like that of Poland's Solidarity which eventually forced the collapse of Communist Party rule.

"We will keep on striking until the end," said miner Sergei Vinichuk, sitting in a strike committee headquarters decorated with the "solidarity" emblem.

"There is nothing else left for us to do," he sighed.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Sunday, April 21, 1991
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell		
U.S. dollar	681.0	685.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	492.2 495.2
Pound Sterling	1172.3	1179.3	Dutch guilder	348.1 350.2
Deutschemark	392.2	394.6	Swedish crown	109.9 110.6
Swiss franc	463.8	466.6	Italian lira (for 100)	53.2 53.5
French franc	116.4	117.1	Belgian franc (for 10)	190.9 192.0

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Cinema **NIJOUN** Tel: 675571

Adel Imam...in **Dangerous recorder**
(Arabic)
Show: 12:30, 3:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema **RAINBOW** Tel: 625155

★ **BEST OF THE BEST**

Show: 3:30, 8:30 p.m.

★ **SAMIRA BADRAN AFFAIR**

Show: 6:30

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

Madonna & Warren Betty

★ **DICK TRACY**

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

Laila Elwi in

★ **THE INTOXICATED**

(Arabic)

★ **LIVE HARD**

Show: 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

China's central bank lowers interest rates

BEIJING (R) — In a move that could be linked to a major new economic reform, China's central bank, the People's Bank of China, has announced a cut in deposit and loan interest rates.

The bank cut deposit rates by an average of one per cent and loan rates by an average of 0.7 per cent, according to an announcement published in official newspapers Sunday.

Financial analysts said the drop in interest rates was linked to a new financial experiment announced Saturday.

Instead of forcing workers to buy treasury bonds by docking their pay, as has been the practice in the past, the government Saturday signed with a syndicate to underwrite about one quarter of all government bonds issued to cover the government deficit and market them to the public with an attractive interest rate.

Saturday's announcement did not specify the interest the three-year bonds will carry. Sources close to the syndicate said it would be above the new rate for three-year bank deposit rates, which the official economic daily reported at 8.28 per cent.

The difference between the interest rates on the government

bonds and on fixed deposits will all but guarantee success for the underwriting, the financial analysts said.

The official central bank statement made no mention of the underwriting experiment.

Economic Daily said the decision to change rates was prompted by a record rise in deposits last year.

Bank deposits swelled by 188.7 billion yuan (\$35.7 billion) to 700 billion yuan (\$132.5 billion) at the end of last year.

In January this year banks took in a further 18 billion yuan (\$3.4 billion) in deposits.

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NATO faces crisis in key air defences now cold war over

BRUSSELS (R) — NATO's air defences, one of the first lines of protection from any threat to the West, are heading for a crisis — threatened by shrinking budgets now that the cold war is history.

NATO officials say a new, multi-billion dollar air defence system and a project to stop Western allied aircraft from shooting each other down by mistake in combat face major problems because of spending cuts among the 16 member nations.

There is growing pressure from civil airlines for the military to give up the exclusive rights of access to some areas in Europe's increasingly crowded skies.

In addition, low-level flight training in Europe, which NATO military planners say is essential to maintain pilot reflexes and combat readiness, has been cut to almost nothing. Plans for new NATO low-level training base were ditched last year.

"This is worrying and perhaps ultimately dangerous," said one NATO official, who asked not to be identified.

"The Soviet threat of an invasion has gone — but we still need modern air defences. What if

there were an air attack from the Middle East on a NATO member? Or another Gulf war?"

The Gulf war proved that mastery of the skies can win conflicts. NATO is convinced that it is also necessary to keep the peace, with a network of advanced early-warning radars and high-technology systems to coordinate allied air forces.

In Europe, NATO allies have 10,000 fixed-wing military aircraft and thousands of helicopters, of many different types.

During the Gulf crisis, there was an increase of between 10 and 30 per cent in European air traffic — caused by military deployments to the Gulf by the United States and its allies.

"Military requirements are increasingly hard to meet ... It's essential for the military to be able to operate in a meaningful way," another NATO official said.

In spite of that conviction, NATO nations are eager to cash in the much-vaunted "peace dividend" and are already starting to cut their military forces across the board.

"The worry is about unilateral

and unstructured disarmament," said one NATO diplomat. "We need to coordinate our efforts more closely. We will have smaller forces now the cold war is over — but we need greater efficiency for those forces."

For aircraft, that efficiency is won with the latest in computerised technology and radar systems. The problem is, they are enormously expensive. Not everyone wants to pay the price.

At a meeting in Brussels last week, senior officials from NATO nations provisionally agreed to slash the original programme for a new air command and control system (ACCS) in Europe by around two-thirds.

"The result of this has been that some nations are now wondering whether the system will be worth having at all if we cannot put the money in," said another NATO diplomat.

ACCS, originally conceived in the mid-1980s, is designed to replace a system that is ageing fast — particularly in NATO's southern region, where the alliance now thinks the greatest instabilities and risks lie.

During the Gulf crisis, NATO

sent more than 40 warplanes to alliance member Turkey, to deter any attack from neighbouring Iraq. In addition, the alliance is worried about instability in the Middle East and North Africa.

"Some of the radar systems in the southern region date from just after World War II. There are serious deficiencies," said another NATO official.

The alliance has also suspended a \$6 billion project to stop its aircraft shooting each other down in a war, by updating an electronic identification system that is outdated.

The system is regarded as crucial by military planners, since today's fighter aircraft rarely need to engage in close-up "dog-fights" to shoot down the enemy.

The ability to sort out enemies from friends on radar and within range of missiles — but still out of sight, miles away — is vital for modern combat pilots.

"If there's ever a proper war in the air involving NATO forces, in Europe or elsewhere, they will need this kind of system," said David Hobbs, an expert on defence technology with the North Atlantic assembly in Brussels.

16 die in weekend of S. African violence

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Police Sunday reported nine people killed in South African political violence, pushing the weekend toll to 16, including a black Soweto mayor and a man who was beheaded and burned.

Police said they found burned torso of a man in Vosloorus, one of the Johannesburg black townships worst hit by political violence this year.

"The victim had been decapitated and his hands and feet had been cut off," the police report said.

He was found near a mainly-Zulu hostel for migrant workers

and police said he appeared to have been dragged from there towards the homes of rivals mostly loyal to the African National Congress (ANC).

More than 1,200 people have been killed in townships around Johannesburg since August in fighting between ANC supporters

and rivals loyal to Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi's Inkatha Freedom Party.

ANC leader Nelson Mandela has met Buthelezi twice this year in unsuccessful attempts to stop the fighting, but the ANC has initially rejected a government plan for all-party talks on the violence from May 24.

President F.W. de Klerk proposed the conference Thursday, before he left for a week-long visit to Europe. He said everyone involved in trying to stop the fighting should attend.

He ignored an ANC ultimatum to end the bloodshed and sack Law and Order Minister Adriaan Vlok and Defence Minister Magnus Malan by May 9.

Sunday's police report listed six incidents of renewed political violence around Johannesburg and in Natal province, where the fighting began four years ago.

Three people were shot in a raid by unidentified rivals at Mpumaza in Natal Saturday and a man defending his home shot and killed an attacker at Ndeleni in the same area.

Around Johannesburg, two men were found shot and hacked to death in the Johannesburg township of Alexandra and a man was found shot dead in Khatlehong, east of Johannesburg.

India to free detained Sikhs ahead of elections

CHANDIGARH, India (Agencies) — The governor of India's Punjab state, appointed to crack down Sikh separatists, announced Saturday that several hundred detained youths would be freed.

Retired General O.P. Malhotra, conceding demands by human rights activists ahead of India's coming elections, also told a news conference that security forces would be ordered to stop searching devotees entering Sikhdom's holiest shrine, the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

"All due care will be taken that the security forces in the state do not go beyond their legitimate duties for enforcing law and order and do not cause harassment to innocent people," Malhotra said.

He did not specify how many detainees would be freed. Official sources say 11,000 Sikh youths are jailed in Punjab and elsewhere. Most have been charged but they have been held — some for up to eight years — without being brought to trial.

The announcement fulfils pledges by Prime Minister Chandrababu Naidu, who has been wooing hardline Sikh politicians ahead of India's general election set for May 20, 23 and 26.

Malhotra was appointed last year by Delhi which rules Punjab directly because of a violent campaign waged by extremists for a separate Sikh homeland.

Delhi has also taken control of Assam state where Maoist rebels are fighting government troops. Shekhar has been waging a political battle to have both parliamentary polls and elections for state assemblies held in Punjab and Assam.

Political analysts say militants could sweep the polls in the two states. Shekhar, whose government was in a minority in the outgoing parliament, would be in a good position to bargain for their support after the elections.

Shekhar has greater credibility among Sikhs than most Indian politicians because he stood almost alone in 1984 in opposing a decision by then-Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to send troops into the Golden Temple to root out militants.

Indira Gandhi's son Rajiv, her successor as prime minister, is unlikely to reap votes in Punjab or Assam and has led opposition to elections there, saying the militants would coerce voters.

Voting for state assemblies would return Punjab and Assam

to local rule. But India's election commission has postponed the elections in the two states without setting dates. If the polls are delayed long enough, a new government in Delhi would have the power to over-rule Shekhar and cancel them.

Malhotra also agreed to two demands related to the storming of the Golden Temple. He promised to publish names of those killed in the attack — estimated at about 1,000 — and to try to restore religious manuscripts which Sikhs allege soldiers took from the temple.

In New Delhi, Shekhar's tiny party tried to assert its identity by rearranging its name to Samajwadi Janata Party from Janata Dal (Socialist). Both mean Socialist People's Party.

The main opponent of Gandhi's Congress Party in the national polls is the Janata Dal headed by Former Prime Minister Vishwanath Pratap Singh.

Meanwhile Kashmiri villagers accused Indian troops of lining up and shooting a militant and seven local men in weekend killings that the government recorded as deaths by "crossfire."

The alleged atrocity is the latest example of the brutality that Kashmiris say they have routinely endured from the security forces of Hindu-dominated India since the Muslim separatist movement in Kashmir turned violent 16 months ago.

Sherif Din, 45, said he was plowing his field on a nearby terrace and saw Mirza Khan, whom villagers said was a Kashmiri militant, and seven men from 70-year-old Raj Wali's family shot dead by about a dozen uniformed men from the paramilitary Indian border security force.

Wali said that he and the seven men were beaten by troops who ordered them to reveal the whereabouts of ammunition caches.

"I said, 'I don't know. My sons are farmers and cattle herders, not militants,'" Wali said, displaying bruises on his legs. "The whole night they were beating my sons. I went to the mosque and prayed to God that if my sons are spared I would sacrifice 1,100 rupees (about \$60) worth of cattle in thanksgiving."

As is customary in this Gujar tribal area, Wali referred to all the young men in his family as his sons. Among the dead were four of his real sons.

Reagan switches portraits in White House

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former President Ronald Reagan has switched his official portrait in the White House foyer because his friends didn't like the old one. The much-criticized original portrait by artist Aaron Shikler has been banished to storage. In its place is a rendering of Reagan by Everett Raymond Kinstler. Reagan requested the new painting because some of his supporters "thought the original portrait was not a good likeness," said Reagan's spokesman in Los Angeles, Bill Garber. The new oil portrait, measuring 40 by 50 inches (100 by 130 centimetres), was put up and was on view when guests arrived for the state dinner honouring Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro. It shows Reagan, in a dark pin-stripe suit, seated on a White House balcony with a view of the Jefferson Memorial in the background. The original portrait, depicting a standing Reagan with a somewhat odd grin.

Stallone sued over car ramming

LOS ANGELES (R) — Actor Sylvester Stallone was sued by a photographer who claimed the star rammed his automobile several times during a high speed car chase through Hollywood. Stallone's bodyguard, Gary Compton, was also sued by freelance cameraman Phillip Norris, who is seeking unspecified damages against the two for bodily injuries and "emotional distress, pain, anxiety, humiliation, depression, headaches, sleeplessness and nausea." At a news conference announcing the lawsuit, Norris' lawyer, James Davis, said "if I take my car and ram into yours repeatedly at high speed on a public road, I have committed assault and endangered everyone in the neighbourhood." Norris said the incident occurred last month when he and another photographer were taking pictures of Stallone leaving a Hollywood bar. Norris told police the 44-year-old star of the Rocky and Rambo series of movies and his bodyguard chased him and his colleague through the streets of Hollywood, deliberately ramming the photographer's car several times. Stallone, whose Mercedes was impounded by police as evidence in the case, has said it was the other way round: That Norris crashed into his car in a hit-and-run accident and he was chasing him to get his licence plate number.

Nureyev, Fonteyn were never lovers

LONDON (AP) — Ballet star Rudolf Nureyev said in an interview published Sunday that he and the late British ballerina Margot Fonteyn loved each other but were never lovers. "I fell in love with Margot the moment I saw her. We had a special relationship," Nureyev was quoted as saying in early editions of London's Sunday Express. "I wanted the relationship to be more, but she loved her Tito." — her Panamanian husband Robert "Tito" Arias, the Russian dancer said. "We loved each other but that love became friendship. And now I feel that I have lost a very dear friend," Nureyev said. Ms. Fonteyn died in Panama City on Feb. 21 at age 71. Her husband, whom she married in 1955, died in 1989 after she had devotedly nursed him for 25 years following an assassination attempt which left him paralysed. Nureyev, now 53, met the ballerina in 1962 when she was 42 and about to retire. He had defected from the Kirov Ballet while on a visit to Paris the year before. They formed an electrifying partnership and their mutual admiration was obvious in their dancing. The truth of their relationship remained a source of speculation ever since. "The reason we could create a fantasy on stage is because it never became reality. If it had then the magic would have gone," Nureyev was quoted as saying. He added: "She said to me 'the only time I am alive is when I am on stage' and I felt the same." "Of course I miss her very much. Every performance we had a special dialogue. It was a great event. She was the best and the most radiant," Nureyev said. Ms. Fonteyn and himself used to go out dancing in nightclubs in London. "It was wonderful. I was as silent as a fish. I was too shy," he said. "But we would dance the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. We would dance rock and roll and the jitterbug. I was very good at the twist."

Right-wing party gains in Iceland

REYKJAVIK (R) — A right-wing opposition party made the biggest gains Saturday in Iceland's parliamentary elections dominated by concern about ties to the European Community (EC) and a sluggish economy.

But despite a surge in support for the Independence Party, led by Reykjavik Mayor David Oddsson, politicians said Sunday it could take weeks to work out which parties would form a new government for the volcanic island's 255,000 people.

The ruling centre-left coalition of Prime Minister Steingunnur Hermannsson might survive with a tiny majority — or the Independence Party could join forces with one of three ruling parties to give it control of the Althing (parliament).

With almost 80 per cent of the votes counted, the Independence Party was set to be the biggest winner with 25 seats in the 63-seat Althing, up from 18 in the last elections in 1987, television computer forecasts showed.

"This is one of the best results we have ever had," Oddsson, 43, a playwright who won the party leadership earlier this year, told private television.

Voter turnout was high, at around 89 per cent of the electorate.

The three surviving parties from the ruling coalition — two small groups in the government lost their seats — were expected to win 33 seats in the Althing, which traces its origins to the assembly established by the island's Viking settlers in 930 AD.

"It's a tradition in this country, which is doomed forever to have coalitions, that the formation of the government can take some time," Foreign Minister Jon Baldvin Hannibalsson of the Social Democratic Party said. "I think it could take a few weeks."

"It's by no means certain that it'll be possible for the coalition partners to continue," he told Reuters. The Social Democrats were likely to retain 10 Althing seats.

Iceland is a member of the

European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the Social Democrats have spearheaded the island's efforts to take part in a planned EFTA-EC free trade zone from the end of 1992. No party favours EC membership.

All parties oppose EC demands to allow EC trawlers to fish in Icelandic waters in return for free access to EC markets for Icelandic fish. Fish make up 70 per cent of Iceland's export earnings.

Hermannsson's government has pushed through austerity policies which are likely to bring one per cent economic growth this year after a sharp recession in the late 1980s.

The Progressive Party is likely to win 13 seats, unchanged from 1987. The leftist People's Alliance — the third surviving coalition partner — is likely to have 10 Althing seats, up two.

The only other party likely to be represented in the Althing is the opposition Women's Alliance, the first all-woman party in the world to be represented in a national parliament when it entered the Althing in 1983. It was likely to lose one of its six seats.



Ertha Pascal Trouillot
Former head of Haitian palace guard arrested

PORT-AU-PRINCE (R) — Former army Colonel Christophe Dardome, who headed the national palace guard under ousted military ruler Prosper Avril, was arrested and charged with participating in an attempted coup last January, state television has announced.

Earlier this month, former provisional President Ertha Pascal Trouillot was also arrested and questioned about the Jan. 6, 1991, coup, in which she was held at gunpoint by Roger Lafontant, a former interior minister during the Duvalier dictatorship.

Trouillot was later released from jail and told not to leave the country until the government completes its investigation into the coup.

Dardome, who led the feared palace guard during Avril's term in power, was transferred to army headquarters during Trouillot's year-long term as acting president. In that job, he headed the same unit of men and was based in a barracks located in the rear of the presidential palace.

Government prosecutor Anthony Alouidor told reporters that the army's internal report on the coup indicated that Dardome was one of Lafontant's main accomplices in the 10-hour coup.

Rebels kill 21 Sri Lankan villagers

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil separatist guerrillas shot and hacked to death 21 Sinhalese villagers and an elephant on Saturday night in east Sri Lanka, military sources said Sunday.

They said two villagers were also wounded when members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) stormed Neadella, a jungle village in Moneragala district.

The Tigers, wielding guns, knives and swords, killed 13 children, four women and four men. They set fire to three houses.

They also shot dead an elephant which apparently crossed their path, the sources said. Neadella, about 60 kilometres from Moneragala town, is reputed to abound in precious stones. Collecting gems by digging pits is one of the main occupations of

the people in the area. Moneragala district, inhabited mainly by members of Sri Lanka's majority Sinhalese community, adjoins Amparai district which is part of the Tamil homeland claimed by the Tigers in the north and east of the Indian Ocean island.

"The Tigers' aim is to drive the Sinhalese and Muslims from the 30-called Tamil homeland in the north and east," a military officer said. At least 62 Tigers and civilians were killed Saturday in separatist fighting.

The sources said 34 Tigers died in an attack by ground troops and the air force in northwestern Mannar district Saturday.

"In an operation our ground troops killed nine terrorists in Mannar yesterday. Later on 25

fleeing terrorists, who came out into the open area, were destroyed by helicopters. There were no casualties on our side," a military officer said.

Three civilians were killed in crossfire in a battle that erupted when the Tigers, using civilians as a human shield, attacked a military check-point at Thandikulam in northern Vavuniya district Saturday, the sources said.

There were no casualties among the soldiers and it was not known whether there were any among the rebels, they said. Troops also killed three Tigers in eastern Welioy area and another at Elephant Pass in the north, the sources said.

The reports of clashes and casualties could not be independently verified.

Hong Kong vessel feared sunk in Indian Ocean

CANBERRA (R) — Rescuers searched the Indian Ocean Sunday for life rafts carrying survivors from the Hong Kong-registered Mineral Diamond, which they fear has sunk.

The iron ore-carrying ship, with a crew of 27 Indians, was being lashed by gale force winds when it last reported on Wednesday 1,500 miles west of Fremantle, Western Australia.

Sweeps of the area by spotter aircraft, which operated in daylight Saturday and at night, dropping flares, have failed to find any

trace of the vessel, said a spokesman for Australia's Maritime Safety Authority.

"We are now looking for life rafts. We have to assume the vessel has foundered. There have been four sophisticated planes searching the area she last reported," he told Reuters.

"We believe anything that big would have been spotted by now," he said of the 140,000-tonne Mineral Diamond, carrying a full load of ore from Dampier, Western Australia, to the Netherlands.

Crucial week for Salvador as reform deadline nears

SAN SALVADOR (R) — Hopes for peace in El Salvador hinge this week on the ability of government and left-wing rebel negotiators to reach agreement before expiry of a deadline for constitutional reform.

"Time is running short," a Western diplomat said. "If they miss this opportunity it could take them a long time to get back on course."

With all sides agreed that only a political solution will end the conflict, leaders of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) and the centre-right government of President Alfredo Cristiani have negotiated several times over the past two years.

The latest round of talks, which began under the auspices of the United Nations in Mexico on April 4, is seen by many as the most important.

For the first time the two sides have been working to a deadline not of their own making: The closure on April 30 of the 1988-91 legislative assembly and the opening the next day of the 1991-94 assembly.

An article in the constitution stipulates that changes to it must be passed by two consecutive assemblies. So there is little more than a week left to put through the substantial reforms both sides apparently agree are needed for peace, if they are to take effect soon enough to be of use.

"If by May 1 there have been no reforms put through, it will be far more difficult to negotiate," the diplomat said.

Sources close to the talks say, enormous progress has been made, with the government and the guerrillas much closer than before on most issues.

"Previously the FMLN was looking to achieve 90 per cent of its demands before agreeing a ceasefire. Now it's only looking for sufficient to guarantee a level playing field for future negotiations," one source close to the talks said.

But discord has surfaced again in recent days.

Cristiani is under pressure from the far right, which is opposed to any serious reform of the country's institutions and has accused government negotiators of plotting to sell out to "Communists."

The FMLN, apparently reacting to a suggestion by the U.N. moderator of the talks, Alvaro De Soto, has begun to press for a change of constitutional Article 248, the "two assemblies" rule.

This would allow more time to consider a whole package of constitutional reforms covering the nature and future role of the armed forces, the judiciary and the electoral system.

If it was meant to facilitate the negotiating process, the idea of changing Article 248 backfired.

Albania considers ways to end refugee exodus

VIENNA (R) — Albania's communist authorities, anxious to avoid a further uncontrolled exodus of refugees, want to open new border crossings and issue passports to people who have already left illegally, the Albanian News Agency (ATA) reported.

More than 40,000 Albanians left the country in the past year, many crossing to Italy in commandeered ships or dodging armed border guards to flee to Greece and Yugoslavia.

ATA said Interior Minister Gramoz Rucaj told a government meeting Saturday the situation remained "rather disturbing" and illegal border crossings had strained border defences and relations with neighbouring countries.

Albania, which is slowly emerging from decades of Stalinist isolation, held its first multi-party elections last month. The polls were won by the ruling Communists — a factor which Western diplomats say may spark a new mass exodus among the young.

"In general, the meeting stressed the need and adoption of a new regulation on the movement abroad of Albanian and foreign nationals according to international norms and the processes of our country's integration in Europe and the world," ATA said.

It said Albania would hold talks with neighbouring Yugoslavia and Greece about opening new border crossings and would allow refugees who had fled without official travel documents to obtain them at Albanian embassies abroad.

The meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Fatos Nano, said many works of art of historical interest were being smuggled out of the country by illegal emigrants.

Chernobyl's cloud still lingers over Soviet health

CHERNOBYL, USSR (AP) — When a nuclear reactor exploded here five years ago, army helicopters dropped tonnes of sand, lead and boron in a desperate effort to seal the gaping hole.

And each day, after the helicopters returned to base, Anatoly Alexeyev cleaned the radioactive dust from their engines.

Today he is one of 576,000 Soviets listed by their government as suffering the lingering, frightening and still mysterious effects of exposure to Chernobyl's radiation — ranging from headaches to Leukemia.

"Few of us know what really happened to us," the thin, pale Alexeyev said in the shadow of the damaged reactor no. 4, now entombed in steel and concrete.

Although the fifth anniversary of the April 26, 1986, explosion has brought a flood of new statistics, the health consequences of the disaster remain unclear.

Part of the reason is that five years is too short a time to observe all the effects of radiation, especially at low levels.

But it is also because Soviet authorities have been alternately candid and secretive about Chernobyl. For nearly three full days after the explosion, the Foreign Ministry denied that anything had happened, until Sweden detected the radioactive cloud and demanded an explanation.

Later, President Mikhail Gor-

bachev welcomed foreign aid and the Soviet made a full report to the International Atomic Energy Agency. Since then, however, the government has been slow to publish health studies, and Soviet media have accused the authorities of withholding and distorting scientific data.

In the meantime, Alexeyev and thousands of others live with the knowledge that something is very wrong with their bodies, but they don't know what exactly is happening to them, or what to do about it.

"They say grape juice helps," he noted.

Top health and energy officials continued to claim last week — in the face of mounting evidence — that cancer rates have not been affected and only 32 people have died as a result of the accident.

One of the officials, Angelina K. Guskova, conceded that the number of cases of thyroid cancer and leukemia had risen in Byelorussia, the republic hit hardest by fallout.

Late last year, the republic's foreign minister told the United Nations that thyroid disease had doubled in southern Byelorussia, across the Ukrainian border from Chernobyl. He also said anemia, chronic nose and throat illnesses, and various cancers had risen dramatically, particularly among children.

Vladimir Chernousenko, a

nuclear physicist in the Ukraine, recently charged that the disaster has claimed 7,000 to 10,000 lives. Western experts, including the British Atomic Energy Authority, have projected thousands of deaths in the next several decades.

But true statistics may never come out.

In a dramatic broadcast last year, the Soviet television programme "Vozlyad," or "viewpoint," showed that it said were secret orders forbidding Ukrainian doctors from listing leukemia as the cause of death for Chernobyl patients.

Soviet environmentalists and radical politicians accuse the authorities of understating Chernobyl's impact to protect the country's nuclear power programme.

Construction of 30 reactors has been canceled since the explosion, and there are growing calls for shutting down more than two dozen Chernobyl-type RBMK reactors across the country, said Yuri Mishchenko, secretary of the Ukrainian ecological movement, Green World.

More than 4 million people live in the 130,000 square kilometres that were struck by fallout. They continue to produce crops, meat, milk and vegetables for their own consumption and sale across the country.

At highest risk of illness are the 229,000 former cleanup workers,

such as Alexeyev, who the government says were exposed to substantial radiation around the plant.

Alexeyev, now 60, is a professor of thermal engineering at the Kiev Technological Institute in the Ukrainian capital, about 130 kilometres from Chernobyl. He arrived as a consultant a few days after the accident and took duty on the teenage Red Army recruits who had been ordered to clean the vital helicopter turbines.

"They didn't know what they were doing, it was taking them a long time, and they were getting much higher doses than necessary," he said.

So far, frequent checkups have revealed no tumours. But Alexeyev complains of fatigue, headaches and lowered immunity against illness — symptoms Soviets call "Chernobyl Syndrome."

On a recent visit to the reactor, his first trip back in five years, he described his ordeal. He mentioned that after 26 years in the Communist Party, he quit last year and joined Rukh, the Ukrainian Independence Movement.